Problems of Communism

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PAGE

The Soviet Union

The USSR in Transition: Two Views
The Psychology of Soviet Foreign Policy,
by Robert C. Tucker 1
Will Russia "Debolshevize"?,
by David S. Anine 9

The New Soviet Generation

Youth vs. the Regime: Conflict in Values,
by Allen Kassof 15
Patterns of Nonconformity,
by S. V. and P. Utechin 23

Eastern Europe

Poland at the Crossroads
Warsaw and the Communist Bloc,
by Immanuel Birnbaum 30
Anti-Semitism in Poland,
by Czeslaw Milosz 35

Western Europe

Communism and French Labor (Part II),
by Michel Collinet 41

Book Reviews

An Inquiry into Totalitarianism
Karl A. Wittfogel: *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power*,
reviewed by Richard L. Walker 48
Moscow and American Radicalism
Theodore Draper: *The Roots of American Communism*,
reviewed by Ben B. Seligman 50

Notes and Views

Correspondence 52

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The USSR in Transition: Two Views

EDITORS' NOTE: While, in the tumultuous and chaotic period that followed the death of Joseph Stalin, it might still have been legitimate to wonder whether any truly significant changes were occurring in Soviet policy—or, for that matter, Soviet society in general—this has by now become so obvious that only the most implacable skeptics can question it. Rather than engage in fruitless debates whether or not there is anything "new under the Russian sun," it is surely more profitable to accept the fact that the USSR *is* changing, and to inquire into the nature, causes and direction of that change.

It is on the basis of this assumption that we present the two articles below. Although each presents a different interpretation of the USSR in transition, they both agree on one fundamental point: that Stalinism was a unique phenomenon in the history of Russia, one that is not likely to return, all gyrations of Soviet policy notwithstanding. Mr. Tucker portrays Soviet foreign policy as largely a reflection of Stalin's own peculiar mentality, and shows why his death occasioned profound changes in the Soviet world outlook. Mr. Anine, on the other hand, views Stalinism as an impersonal system. He shows that the Stalinist regime was totally independent of any social or political groups in the population, and lists the reasons why, with the death of its creator, it may yet evolve into an instrument of a specific stratum in Soviet society—namely, the rising Soviet managerial bureaucracy, which could deprive communism of its original élan and totalitarian dynamism. These two articles are presented in the hope of initiating a wide discussion on the transformation of Soviet communism. Communications from readers will be welcomed and published in future issues of this magazine.

The Psychology of Soviet Foreign Policy

By ROBERT C. TUCKER

THE story of Soviet foreign policy in the recent past is epitomized in the Biblical adage, "Pride goeth before a fall." * The high-water mark of pride was set at the time of the Twentieth CPSU Congress in early 1956.

In a speech before the assembled delegates Anastas Mikoyan declared:

> Striking are the successes of Soviet foreign policy, especially in the past year. Here too the directing collective of the party has injected a fresh new current, pursuing a high-principled, active and flexible foreign policy, expressed in calm tones and without invective. . . . Certain ossified forms have been cast aside in the work of our diplomacy. . . . Let those swaggering Americans who boast of their wealth of today, their "American way of life," join a contest with us in this field, and they will see where more is done for the good of the people, and whose way of life proves better.

The mood of the leaders was confident and self-assured. Stalin, praise be, is dead and gone, it seemed

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to say. The new collective administration has taken matters in hand. It has set the wrongs to right, corrected the errors, banished the terror, gone out into the world. It has ended the stagnation and charted a new course big with promise, especially in foreign affairs. Thus, the horizons of possibility seemed wide and beckoning. To paraphrase a Russian proverb, the sea itself looked to the Kremlin no more than knee-deep.

So confident, in fact, was the attitude that it now seemed expedient to set the Congress straight on certain disagreeable facts out of the past, and Khrushchev revealed in closed session a part of the story of Stalin's dark record of evil. This speech was the beginning of the fall. By the year's end, the Soviet army was suppressing a popular revolution in Hungary. Poland was launched on the troubled waters of national communism. Foreign Communist parties were in deep difficulties. The USSR was morally isolated again in Europe and large parts of Asia. And various people around the world were speaking seriously of such things as the dissolution of the Soviet empire and the beginning of the end of the Soviet regime.

The author's purpose here is to search for some of the deeper forces and factors at work behind this historic sequence of Russian pride and fall. What are the spiritual roots of the predicament in which the Soviet regime clearly finds itself today? Basically, the problem is to deepen our understanding of what Stalinism meant and the way in which Stalin's death caused change in Soviet policy. In one important aspect, the change had to do with the matter of persuasion. The new Soviet foreign policy which Mikoyan spoke of so proudly in early 1956 was, in a distinctly un-Stalinist sense, a diplomacy of persuasion; and it is just this diplomacy of persuasion which later suffered a shattering setback. But how are we to account for the shift in the Soviet orientation toward persuasion? The view to be developed in these pages holds that it was not simply a matter of shifting tactics but that it had a psychological origin. The crucial fact is that Stalin's death occasioned a psychological revolution in Soviet foreign policy. The meaning of this proposition will be expanded in what follows.

Stalinism and the Cold War

FIRST, let us briefly reconsider the classic period of the cold war. The final chapter in Stalin's life, from the end of World War II to his death in early 1953, was the culminating period of Stalinism in all departments of Soviet life and policy. And in foreign policy, Stalinism means cold war.

Before hostilities ended, Stalin was embarked upon a grandiose endeavor of empire-building in countries coming under the sway of Soviet forces. Contrary to later Soviet propaganda, very little in the way of a spontaneous revolutionary process took place there. In fact, Stalin's policy had by now come to frown on spontaneous revolutionary movements, as was shown, for example, by Tito's wartime difficulties with Moscow. What Stalin wanted to do—and succeeded in doing—in most of Middle Europe can best be described by the Nazi term *Gleichschaltung,* which connotes a process of forcibly bringing a foreign area *under* control and *into* conformity. Middle Europe, along with North Korea and, later, China and North Viet-Nam, came to constitute parts of an enormous, expanded Soviet control-sphere with its center in Moscow.

As this process of *Gleichschaltung* developed in 1944 and 1945, stiffening Western reaction and eventual efforts by the United States and Britain to counteract it were met with Soviet intransigence and, increasingly, Soviet hostility. A set pattern of belligerency came to pervade all aspects of Soviet relations with Western and other countries, and especially with the United States.

In Zhdanov's report at the founding meeting of the Cominform in Warsaw in September 1947, Stalin issued a kind of official declaration of permanent Soviet cold war against the West. From then on until his death, the pattern of belligerency remained rigidly in force. The expressions ran a gamut from hate propaganda and diplomacy of invective to warlike acts such as the blockade of Berlin, and systematic shooting down of US aircraft, and finally to outright war by proxy in Korea. An enormous growth of international tension ensued. The director-general of Soviet belligerency all through this period was Stalin himself. Among the totalitarian despots of this century, he was the supreme practitioner of cold war.

SO far as the motivation of Soviet foreign policy during this period is concerned, it is essential to distinguish between its formal and operative aims. A formal aim is the object one declares oneself to be seeking; an operative aim is the object implicit in what one actually does. The two may or may not coincide.

The discrepancy between them has rarely been more glaring than it was in Stalin's foreign policy during the cold war. The "strengthening of peace" was constantly proclaimed as a Soviet aim; but Soviet actions were blatantly inconsistent with the notion of strengthening peace. Another aim frequently if not always unequivocally declared was that of promoting the cause of the world revolution and the liberation of peoples from the "capitalist system of exploitation." Here too a discrepancy appeared, although less obviously. Stalin,

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as already suggested, had grown deeply hostile to spontaneous revolutionary processes of every kind, including social revolutions from below. He still talked revolution, but he showed in many ways that the revolutionist in him had given way to the hidebound reactionary, enamored of the values of stability, authority, and order. In his essay on linguistics in 1950, he anathematized the Marxian notion that development always takes place through periodic upheavals or "explosions." The very idea of revolutionary explosions had become profoundly distasteful to him.

As for the liberation of peoples from "capitalist exploitation," it is hard to believe that this was Stalin's operative aim, since the Soviet system is one of state monopoly capitalism and the most exploitative in modern history. Nor could his aim have been simply to replace private capitalism with state capitalism or nationalized economies—had it been, he would logically have softened the Soviet attitude toward Britain and other European countries which began to nationalize their economies after the war. And he would not have feuded as he did with Tito's Yugoslavia, where Soviet principles of state capitalism had been carried farther after the war than in most of the satellite states.

The crucial operative aim for Stalin was *control*. This is the conclusion dictated by Stalinist behavior as distinct from the official Stalinist image of that behavior. The operative aim, implicit in all that Stalin did, was to get control of territory and people, and to absolutize that control by every available means, the principal one being police terror.

Examination of the whole postwar process of Soviet *Gleichschaltung* of foreign lands bears out this judgment about the operative aim. Critical confirmation is afforded by the Stalin-Tito conflict. The issue was Tito's refusal to permit Yugoslavia to be incorporated into the Soviet command and control structure. Tito was among the Communist leaders most antagonistic to private capitalism. It was not any deviation on this score that underlay the break, but rather Tito's resistance to Stalin's claim to absolute Soviet control of Yugoslavia. The consequence was a Soviet "little cold war" against Belgrade for as long as Stalin lived; the moment he died, it began to slacken.

The Stalinist ideology of cold war reflected this operative aim of total control indirectly in its image of international reality. This image dichotomized the globe into two "worlds," called the "Soviet camp of peace, socialism, and democracy" and the "American camp of capitalism, imperialism, and war." The political universe was divided cleanly into the white world of Soviet socialist progress and the black world of American capitalist reaction. Stalin had enunciated such a conception of a polarized political universe, with Russia and America as the two antagonistic poles of power, as early as 1927. Twenty years after, it reappeared as the Soviet *working conception* of international reality; that is, it was acted out in terms of actual foreign policy. A Soviet document of 1948 stated:

> **The struggle of the two camps determines now the fate of the whole world, the fate of mankind. This struggle emerges more and more as the chief moving force of the development of our age toward communism. Here lies the basic content of the political struggle of our time.[1]**

The relation between the two-world image and the drive for total control can be stated very simply: the working criterion of "belongingness" to the one world or the other was the criterion of Soviet control. Consequently, the Stalinist definition of the character of a given country's regime turned essentially on the question: Does it constitute a part of the Soviet control-sphere? If so, it was socialist and democratic; if not, capitalist and fascist. The Yugoslav regime, for example, underwent metamorphosis almost overnight in 1948 from a "people's democracy" into a "police regime of the fascist type." Its actual institutional structure had not, of course, changed at all; but its relation to the Soviet control structure had, and this was crucial for Stalin.

There was no geographical or political space between the two worlds, no room for neutralism, no possibility of a "third force," no such thing as nonalignment. Political neutrality in the cold war was just a blind. The pretense of neutrality might be tolerated very grudgingly in a marginal case, such as Finland's, but never admitted in principle. The notion of an "uncommitted nation" or "third force" was nothing but a crude political myth devised for devious Western purposes. The Soviet document already quoted said:

> **The "third line" or "third force" concocted by the right-wing socialists is in fact nothing other than a cover for the policy of defense of capitalism and fight against communism. In our epoch there is not, and cannot be, a "third force". . . . Two forces, two camps, exist throughout the world.[2]**

ONE of the most fateful political consequences of the captivity of Stalinist policy to this conception was the attitude taken in the Kremlin toward the new Asia. Next to the cold war itself, the most important historical fact of the period following World War II was the political emergence of Asia from Western tutelage. There was no way to square this fact with the

[1] Stepanian Ts. A., "Neodolimoye dvizheniie k kommunizmu" ("The Indomitable Movement Toward Communism"), *Voprosy filosofii*, Moscow, 1948, No. 2, p. 87.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 86.

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logic of the Stalinist drive for total control and the two-world image associated with it. For this would mean recognizing Asia as a "third force" or a space between the worlds. Consequently, Stalin, and therefore Stalinist policy, denied the fact, legislated it out of existence. This was one of the key issues of the famous Varga controversy in 1947. In a book written before the end of the war, the Soviet economist Eugene Varga had spotted the new trend, the changing relationship of Europe and Asia. On Stalin's orders, the book was condemned, and its author forced to recant what he knew to be absolutely true. The real facts about the new Asia were purged along with Varga. The newly-won national independence of India, Burma, the Philippines, and other former Western dependencies was pronounced a "fiction," a cunning imperialist device for continuing to exercise control over these countries without appearing to do so. According to the logic of the drive for control, they could not be considered "liberated" so long as they had not yet been incorporated into the Soviet control-sphere. Not having changed worlds in this way, they had to remain integral parts of the black world, *de facto* colonies which the West held on to with the help of "anti-national ruling circles," puppets such as Nehru, U Nu, and others.

Thus, Stalinist policy was predicated on an official delusion of continued Asian bondage to the West. There was no essential change in this regard until Stalin died. There is every reason to believe that most of the men around Stalin were quite aware of the delusive character of this image of the new Asia, and the image of the external world generally. They could see that it was nothing but an externalized portrait of Soviet-bloc reality, and that the external world was not *really* like that. Some, it seems, were painfully conscious of the resulting detriment to Soviet Russia's interests as a great power. In effect, the image blocked off the new Asia as a profitable field for Soviet power politics, constraining policy to costly and risky ventures such as the aggression by proxy in Korea. But the men around Stalin could do nothing, or next to nothing, to correct the situation so long as he was alive and in autocratic control. Few situations could illustrate more convincingly the potential importance of the personality factor in foreign policy.

Illusions and Realities

THIS brings us back to the question of persuasion. Foreign policy in the normal course of events is largely an activity of intergovernmental persuasion. Persuasion aims at influencing other governments to do or not to do certain things, such as concluding a treaty, settling a dispute, joining or not joining an alliance. The basis of appeal is mutuality of interest. Recognition of the other government's interest in its own continued existence and security is always necessarily presupposed.

The Stalinist politics of cold war were not politics of persuasion, and the foregoing discussion suggests the reason why. When the operative aim is total control, persuasion is not a fit instrument of policy; one form or another of aggression is necessitated. Save for the marginal case, Soviet diplomacy withered on the vine during the years 1945 to 1953; the whole range of intergovernmental activities of persuasion by conventional means was excluded.

In the case of Yugoslavia, to take it again as an illustration, there was no possibility of negotiating the issue of total Soviet control. The Tito regime might be persuaded to do all sorts of things in the Soviet interest. The one thing it could not be persuaded to do was to part with its independence, but this was precisely Stalin's demand. Following Stalin's death,

"Proletarian Internationalism": 1957

Communists of all countries ascribe immense significance to the experience of the Soviet Union, which was the first [country] to build socialism in the most difficult circumstances of capitalist encirclement, and without any historical precedent whatsover. This experience has shown that the existence of a powerful Communist Party, its guiding role within the dictatorship of the proletariat, the role of the socialist state in the planned development of a socialist economy, the policy of struggle against imperialist aggression and support of the national liberation movements . . . and the development of international solidarity among working people are all mandatory prerequisites for the building of socialism. As the Chinese paper *People's Daily* so correctly stated recently, the basic aspects of the Soviet experience "reflect the universal law of revolution in a given phase of the general development of human society; this is not only the basic road of the proletariat of the USSR, but also the road on which all proletarians throughout the world must travel for the achievement of victory."

—*"The Development of Socialism and Proletarian Internationalism," by I. Pomelov,* Kommunist, *(Moscow) No. 1, January, 1957, p. 22.*

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the Soviet government began to pursue a policy of persuasion *vis-à-vis* Belgrade, and it is still doing so. The precondition of this, however, was a drastic scaling down of Moscow's demand upon Tito, a change of the operative aim from total control to a relationship of influence. A similar change occurred in the motivation of Soviet policy toward other areas of the non-Soviet world, with similar results in the form of efforts to persuade. What underlay this change was a lessening of the felt *need* for control. This, in turn, was a consequence of the fact that when Stalin died the peculiar needs of his personality ceased to determine the motivation of Soviet foreign policy.

PARADOXICALLY, Stalinist policy in the cold war placed the greatest emphasis on international propaganda. Since propaganda is ordinarily regarded as an instrument *par excellence* of persuasion, how explain the fact that propaganda claimed so much Soviet attention and effort at the very time that policy all but excluded international persuasion in the sense defined? The question is too complex for adequate treatment here. But one important aspect of the answer lies in the two-world fantasy. It saw the black world as inwardly bifurcated, in contrast to the white world, which was monolithic. As the previously quoted ideologist of Stalinism put it, "Two forces, two camps, exist in any capitalist country." The second camp in the black world consisted of all those who belonged—in attitude, in thought, and in deed—to the white world, who regarded themselves as *its* citizens living in a foreign land, and who, therefore, submitted to Soviet control voluntarily.

The Stalinist designation for such persons was "proletarian internationalists." The nucleus of the universal fraternity of spiritual citizens of the Soviet Union was, of course, the membership of foreign Communist parties. But the fraternity was not confined to this circle. *Anybody* could belong. The decisive test of belonging was laid down by Stalin in 1927. "He is an internationalist," said Stalin then, "who unreservedly, unhesitatingly and unconditionally is prepared to defend the USSR, because the USSR is the base of the world revolutionary movement." [3] This reasoning was further elaborated during the period of the cold war. A statement of 1948, for example, refined it as follows:

> At the present time the sole and decisive criterion of proletarian revolutionary internationalism is: *for or against the USSR,* the fatherland of the international proletariat. . . . ***Only he is a genuine internationalist who carries his sympathy, respect, recognition to the point of practical and maximum aid, support, and defense of the USSR by every means and in various forms.***[4]

Note carefully that the criterion for admission to the white camp in the black world was not intellectual; that is, it was not the acceptance of an idea or set of ideas as such. It was rather an act of total self-identification with the Soviet system. It was the participation in a cult, the cult of the USSR, regarded by definition as the repository of the socialist idea. The criterion did not say: Believe in socialism, accept the socialist idea. It said: Believe in the USSR as the fatherland of socialism, accept whatever it tells you as the sacred truth, and do whatever it bids you for its sake.

This difference is more significant than it may seem. It must be borne in mind in analyzing the traumatic effect of Khruschev's denunciation of Stalin on thousands of Soviet sympathizers abroad. It also throws light on Stalinism's thinly veiled distrust and contempt for intellectuals. The intellectual is suspect precisely because of his devotion to ideas and principles as such. Every true totalitarianism—whether Stalin's or Hitler's or any of the others—tries to set up complete loyalty and devotion *to itself,* to the system and the Leader, as the only ultimate principle.

RETURNING to the question about propaganda, it is not hard to see why so much effort was expended in this field during the very years when so little attempt was being made at international persuasion. The principal function of the international propaganda was to preserve and foster the cult of the USSR, and for this reason it may be regarded as essentially an extension of Soviet internal propaganda to the foreign field. The purpose was not to persuade the audience through an appeal to the intellectual faculties; it was rather to indoctrinate participants in the cult, to train "internationalists." That is, it presupposed the surrender of the critical faculties, the will to believe, the prior emotional self-identification *in toto* with the object of the cult, the USSR.

Given such identification, everything might be credible, no lie too big to be swallowed as gospel truth. If Moscow, for example, said that the Americans were waging germ warfare in Korea, this—to the participant in the cult—had to be true *because Moscow said so.* Hence, the basic task of the international propaganda was to furnish continual new material for the cult, to hold aloft day in and day out the glorious, glowing

[3] I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia* (Works), Moscow, 1948, Vol. X, p. 51.

[4] Stepanian, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

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image of Soviet reality and at the same time to besmirch to the utmost the image of the enemy camp. The inner content of the cold war propaganda can therefore be epitomized in ten words: The Soviet world is white; the American world is black. The vital importance of the Iron Curtain as a protective shield for this two-world fantasy is obvious.

It has been suggested above that the two-world conception was a reflex of the Stalinist drive for total control, which operated at its high point during the period of the cold war. However, the argument now indicates that the relation between these two phenomena was an interactive one. On the one hand, the felt need for absolute control reinforced the image of the world as split in two. But on the other hand, this image, and particularly the projection of the Soviet world as glisteningly white, greatly reinforced the need for control, dictating, for example, all the devices of control summed up in the phrase "Iron Curtain." Thus, one very important contributing motivation for the Stalinist control drive was the urge to make an illusion about Russia seem real.

THE actual fact was that Russia had become in the Soviet period a powerful, industrialized country with an enslaved, miserable, poverty-stricken population, with an economy best described as state monopoly capitalism, and with a political system of the fascist police-state variety; and the empire was an extension of all this to captive peoples abroad. In the official illusion, however, the USSR appeared as the realization of man's dream of social utopia, a land of progress and prosperity, where all the economic problems were solved or in process of solution, where culture was in flower, where freedom and justice prevailed, where nearly everybody was happy; and the empire was just an extension of all these benefits to grateful peoples on the periphery.

This was no mere Potemkin village; it was a *Potemkin Russia,* fabricated not out of wooden façades but out of words and pictures and mass spectacles in Red Square. Absolute centralized control was necessary in order to make the illusion *appear* to be true. The discrepancy between the Potemkin Russia and the real Russia could be hidden from view so long as the M.V.D. terror machine operated to keep everything under control, to see to it that nobody revolted, that few if any people got in or out, that everyone in Russia and the satellites pretended to be living in the Potemkin world, that no one spoke the truth out loud, and that articles and books and films complied with the dictates of "socialist realism"; that is, that they depicted the illusion.

But from whose view would the discrepancy be hidden by such means? Not, certainly, from the ordinary Soviet citizen's; he realized what kind of Russia he was living in, and that it had nothing in common with the heavenly system portrayed in the propaganda. The Soviet and satellite peoples knew all about the discrepancy, knew much more about it than their well-meaning friends in the West who were trying to enlighten them on the point. The bureaucracy knew about it. Even high up in the Politburo much was known about it. For whom, then, was the big show staged? In part it was staged for the "proletarian internationalists" abroad, to keep them comfortably deluded. But the enormous investment of effort that this enterprise of political stagecraft entailed was undertaken mainly for another reason: the crucial spectator was Stalin. It was he who imperatively needed the Potemkin Russia. The same force of neurotic self-idealization which underlay the Stalin cult also underlay the cult of the USSR. The latter had become an extension of the former: the idealized Russia was a background panorama for the figure of the idealized Stalin.

A passage in Khrushchev's secret report to the Twentieth Congress gives us an interesting glimpse into Stalin's need for the Potemkin Russia. Khrushchev spoke of the agricultural situation, which was going from bad to worse in Stalin's final years:

> All those who interested themselves even a little in the national situation saw the difficult situation in agriculture, but Stalin never even noted it. Did we tell Stalin about this? Yes, we told him, but he did not support us. Why? Because Stalin never traveled anywhere. . . . He knew the country and agriculture only from films. And these films had dressed up and beautified the existing situation in agriculture. Many films so pictured *kolkhoz* life that the tables were bending from the weight of turkeys and geese. Evidently, Stalin thought that it was actually so.

Clearly, Khrushchev is not a very good psychologist. He says that Stalin remained ignorant of the crisis in Soviet agriculture because he never traveled anywhere. The point is true but trivial. For it only raises the question: What kept him from traveling around or taking other steps to learn the real state of affairs? The answer is to be found in Stalin's stringent need for the idealized image of Russia, one aspect of which was the image of *kolkhoz* prosperity. Naturally, police terror could not produce more grain, nor build houses for the workers, nor outstrip the USA in technology, nor make the Soviet people happy and contented and the satellite peoples grateful to Russia and Stalin. But it could make it *seem* as though all this was so, and that was its essential function.

The key requisite was total control. Stalinist policy, internal as well as external, was harnessed to a pro-

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digious effort to act out for Stalin an official illusion about Russia and the world. That is why Stalinism rested on Stalin and why his death marked a decisive turn in Russian history and world politics. It knocked the psychological prop out of the structure of Stalinist policy. It removed the motivating source of the politics of megalomania. A stream of changes followed swiftly.

The Aftermath

THIS psychological revolution forms the proper starting point for an analysis of Soviet policy in the post-Stalin period. In one aspect, it is a story of official Russia's move to readjust to the real world. In another, it is a story of the failure to carry through the readjustment, and especially of ignorance or disregard of the full extent of popular disaffection in Russia and the satellites. The Malenkov policy, a pale Soviet version of what we have come to call "national communism," seemed to reflect some awareness of this; but it fell under the onslaught of Khrushchev, in whom the mentality of the provincial party officialdom finds its classic expression.

Khrushchev was able and willing to admit that Soviet agriculture was in a mess, that the bureaucratic administration was grossly overcentralized, that Soviet intellectual life was stagnating in its isolation from the world, that the terror had been terribly costly in terms of national progress and so on. But he would not admit, or could not see, certain other realities, such as the fact that most Russians are heartily sick of such things as Five-Year Plans, the priority of heavy industry, the sacrifice of the present to a future which never comes, and that they will not co-operate voluntarily with a regime which endeavors to reform in the interests of *its* efficiency rather than *their* welfare. The present beginnings of an opposition movement from below are the confirmation of this.

Readjustment to the realities of the external world was not so inhibited. After an interlude of relative quiet under Malenkov, the Soviet regime embarked on a dynamic new policy designed to reshape the international environment. This was no longer a policy of cold war in the classic Stalin sense. The cold war pattern of total belligerency subsided in favor of the slogan of *détente,* the meeting at the summit, and the challenge to peaceful competition of systems. However, the new policy also was fundamentally anti-Western and anti-American from the start. It was addressed in large part to the breaking up of the Western alliance system, which Stalin's cold war had brought into existence and constantly solidified. It was only the shift of motivation, the subsiding of the drive for total control consequent upon Stalin's death, which made it possible for this to become an operative as distinguished from merely a declared aim of Soviet foreign policy. No longer harnessed to the obsession with absolute control, the new policy expressed an expansionism of Soviet influence, a quest, as it were, for more Finlands rather than more Mongolias, more Afghanistans rather than more Albanias. It found its most fertile field in the Middle East, where it allied itself with the forces of a malignant anti-Western nationalism.

ALL this was accompanied by a change in the official Soviet image of the world, ratified by the Twentieth Party Congress. The compulsion to dichotomize the image of the world was no longer operative. The two-world conception faded out, giving way to the picture of *one* world in which two rival systems of states, the socialist and the capitalist, compete for a preponderance of world influence. This was no longer a Stalinist world of "capitalist encirclement." On the contrary, territories contiguous to the Soviet orbit were now seen as fields for the penetration of Soviet capital, Soviet know-how, Soviet arms, and Soviet ideas. Moscow gave the new Asia the political recognition which Stalin had withheld. This new world of Soviet foreign policy was a world which did not exclude political neutrality, or third forces, or the notion of an uncommitted nation. For countries outside the Soviet bloc, there were alternate roads to socialism, even a parliamentary road. The rightwing socialists were, after all, rightwing socialists. Tito's Yugoslavia was not a capitalist-fascist degeneration, merely a wayward form of people's democracy.

In short, Stalin's successors reintegrated the political universe. The world as projected on the new political map was not a stark contrast in black and white. There were various shades of gray in the non-Soviet part of it, and the gray areas were the focus of the new expansionism of influence. A non-Soviet nation unaligned with the Western military system and friendly to the USSR was now described as a "peace zone." The ambitious new policy envisaged the eventual transformation of the whole of the Eurasian continent into one immense "peace zone," that is, one big zone of preponderant Soviet influence.

When influence is the operative aim, persuasion is a logical means. Hence the new policy placed tremendous emphasis upon the function of persuasion. The revival of diplomacy and trade, the sponsoring of cultural and technical exchange, the encouragement of official contacts at many levels, the drive to normalize relations with many countries, and the participation in

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previously boycotted international bodies were, from this point of view, ways of persuading countries that they could do business safely and profitably with the USSR. Many of the major acts of Soviet foreign policy in 1955 were intended primarily as acts of persuasion. From the standpoint of detaching middle nations from dependence upon the Western security system, it was imperative to persuade them that the world was safe for non-alignment. The Soviet motivation in bringing about the Geneva summit conference was closely linked with this ulterior aim of persuasion. Austria was evacuated, and the long-delayed treaty signed, largely in order to make of this country a showcase of Soviet willingness to coexist with small neutrals in its vicinity, the idea being to persuade other countries that they too could be Austrias and flourish in peace.

Finally, changes of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe were partly inspired by this aim of persuasion. If independent countries were to be persuaded to disalign themselves from the West and enter into close relationships with the Soviet Union, something had to be done about the satellites; at the very least they had to be made to look less satellitish. One step to be taken was the partial undoing of the *Gleichschaltung*. Another was the creation of the Warsaw treaty system as a NATO-looking device for retention of Soviet military control of the whole area after control by police terror was relaxed. Further, the potential appeal of Titoism to semi-autonomous Soviet dependencies in Eastern Europe had to be neutralized, and this, it seemed, could best be done by making friends with Tito, or at least making it *appear* that friendship was restored. Then Titoism could cease being a symbol of anti-Russianism and its disruptive force would be negated.

THIS was the point at which the new policy of international persuasion began to get ahead of itself. Ironically, the trouble sprang in part from the old habit of blinking the distinction between appearance and reality, in this case between the appearance and reality of a Soviet *entente* with Tito. It was a momentous miscalculation to suppose that a mere facade of *entente* would serve the Soviet purpose adequately. Actually, it contributed to the ripening of the conditions which produced the explosion of popular wrath in Hungary. The whole boldly-conceived policy of international persuasion came to grief in this explosion. The spectacle of Hungary displayed the Soviet regime to the world as the repressive, imperialist, and anti-popular dictatorship that it is. Some countries which had been objects of the new expansionism of influence drew back. Others at least began to have second thoughts about doing much political business with the USSR. The scheme of transforming Eurasia into a zone of preponderant Soviet influence suffered an incalculable setback. The great campaign to persuade culminated in a crisis of Soviet persuasion.

The crisis involves far more than a diplomatic debacle. It was the impact of Khrushchev's secret attack on the Stalin cult that set the train of events rolling toward the Hungarian catastrophe and the breakdown of the new diplomacy. Another consequence of the anti-Stalin speech, however, was to cut off the path of orderly political retreat. In the act of destroying the Stalin myth, Khrushchev pulled down the whole structure of illusion about Stalin's Russia. The cult of the USSR, on which the claim to the allegiance of "proletarian internationalists" had been based, was fused with the cult of Stalin. They stood or fell together. Khrushchev's speech inadvertently struck them both down. By revealing what Stalin was, he in effect informed all participants in the cult of the USSR that the country which they had lovingly looked upon as the "socialist fatherland" had for twenty years been a fascist despotism similar to Hitler's. The reverberations of this thunderbolt are still resounding around the world.

Recently there have been tendencies to turn back, to reestablish control, to resume the posture of cold war, even to take a nostalgic new look at old Stalin. Khrushchev extols Stalin's virtues in the "struggle against imperialism." The key idea, says *Pravda,* is the idea of "proletarian internationalism." For example, "proletarian internationalists" know that the Hungarian revolution was really a "counterrevolutionary *putsch*" and that the Soviet armed intervention and bloody suppression of it were really "aid for the cause of socialism and people's democracy." What the Hungarians did only *appeared* to be a national revolt, and what the Soviet army did only *appeared* to be an intervention. On what grounds should "proletarian internationalists" take this view of the facts? Primarily, on the ground that the USSR is the "socialist fatherland" of the workers. We see what this means. It is a call to restoration of the broken structure of illusion.

NOTE: The last issue of this magazine carried an excerpt from *The Hungarian Tragedy,* by Peter Fryer (Dennis Dobson, London, 1956). Due to an error, it was not made clear at that time that copyright was granted to *Problems of Communism* only, and that permission to reprint the excerpt must be obtained directly from the publisher.

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This is a strategic reaction. But it is no solution for the enormous dilemma in which Soviet policy finds itself today, for in reality there can be no going back now. The way back is blocked beyond a very narrow point. The revival of Stalin's methods may be possible to a certain extent. But Stalinism, as this essay has attempted to show, is not just a matter of "methods." Nor will propaganda help, no matter how great the effort. The Potemkin Russia of Stalinism is gone beyond recall. Stalin's death, Khrushchev's attack on Stalin, and all the events that followed, have seen to that.

Over a century ago, the Russian thinker Belinsky wrote: "It is time for us to stop *seeming*, and start *being*." It is a good text for today's Russians. The future of Russia, one likes to hope, belongs to those forces in Russian society who will not tolerate official blurring of the distinction between appearances and reality.

Will Russia "Debolshevize"?

By DAVID S. ANINE

NO one will deny that with the death of Stalin Russia's Communist regime entered a new phase of development. Formally, this "new phase" is marked by the end of Stalin's one-man rule and its replacement by a "collective dictatorship." Beneath this formal change, however, there is a deeper one, for with the end of the Stalin phase a regeneration and reconstruction of the socio-political essence of the regime itself is in prospect.

This article will attempt to prove that: 1) Stalin's dictatorship was a regime of a special type, which had the features of what may be termed a "supraclass regime"; 2) since Stalin's death a trend transforming the "supraclass regime" into a "class regime" has become apparent.

Stalin's Supraclass Regime

THE founder of Russian Marxism, Georgi V. Plekhanov, once depicted the classical Tsarist autocracy of the 16th through the 18th centuries as a "two-storied building in which the enslavement of the inhabitants of the lower floor was justified by the enslavement of the inhabitants of the upper floor." V. O. Kliuchevski, the brilliant Russian 19th century historian, made the same point when he wrote that in old Russia "the socio-economic enslavement of the peasantry justified the political enslavement of the nobility." Substitute the Soviet privileged bureaucracy for the nobility, and the Soviet people as a whole for the peasantry, and one has a fair approximation of the socio-political structure of the Soviet regime during the Stalinist period.

The Stalin dictatorship was certainly not a "workers' and peasants' " regime. But neither did Stalin rule in behalf of the party's seven million members, nor, for that matter, was his rule a blessing even for the party's leading bureaucrats. The apparent masters were in reality slaves, alike subject to the same tyranny and terror which they practiced on the masses of the Soviet people. A study of the social and political affiliations of the victims of Stalin's terror would undoubtedly show that the *proportionally* most numerous group was not the remnants of the "exploiting classes" or of former opposition parties, not even the peasantry; it was the Communists themselves—in fact, the "leading" stratum of the Communist Party, the stratum which has often been called the "ruling class" in Western political literature. No less a person than Nikita S. Khrushchev in his famous secret speech to the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956 testified to the absolute lack of rights and defenselessness of the so-called Soviet "ruling class": 98 of 139 (*i.e.*, 70 percent) candidates and members elected to the Central Committee by the

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Seventeenth Congress in 1934, arrested and shot; 1108 of 1966 delegates to the same Congress, arrested.[1]

Under Stalin's dictatorship the top party bureaucracy was not the *master* of political power, but merely its *instrument*. It was no more able to consolidate and force a guarantee of political and personal rights for itself than was any other social group in Soviet society.[2] Thus, Stalin's dictatorship shared the common defining trait of every "supraclass regime," an *independence* with regard to all social groups and classes, including those which exercise command functions.

Whip and Gingerbread

INEVITABLY we ask ourselves what motivated the fidelity and devotion shown by Soviet Communists to a regime which periodically destroyed them. No doubt part of the answer is the persistence of a revolutionary myth which bent the regime's well indoctrinated party servants to overlook not only its objective horrors, but their own peril. Dictatorship and terror were for many the necessary price for the building of the "country of socialism" and the advance post of "world communism"; in their view, the Revolution remained pure even when it devoured its own devoted sons, for it "preserved the basic socialist conquests." This attitude is especially characteristic of the old Bolsheviks. The tortures they endured do not by themselves seem sufficient to explain the public repentance and behavior at their trials of such men as Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin and Rakovsky. There was also their sincere desire to remain "useful to the Revolution" which, gone awry, nevertheless created the "base" of a "socialist society." The same attitude was behind Trotsky's position that he would side with Stalinist Russia in the event of a war with the capitalist countries, a view he proclaimed after being banished from Russia and hounded by Stalin from one country to another.

For those much more numerous persons to whom rationalizations of such a lofty and "idealistic" nature were alien, there remained means no less effective, namely, terror and material privileges. Of course, the use of terror and material privileges is not without its disadvantages. Terror, as Stalin's successors recognized, suppresses creative initiative; and the growth of material well-being on the part of the bureaucracy tends to deflate that Communist idealism which had played so large a part in the Bolshevik dynamism.

However, there is no doubt that it was precisely the mechanism of terror that ensured the vitality and survival of Stalin's dictatorship. Only through terror did he prevent the consolidation of the hydra-headed bureaucracy into a power bloc capable of defending its privileges and eventually of becoming a political counterweight and competitor of his regime. His monopoly of all the economic resources of the country provided him with an extraordinary capacity for maneuvering. The whip and gingerbread used alternately, depending on circumstances, was one of the basic methods of Stalinist policy. Stalin's bureaucratic agents, deprived of political rights but materially privileged, were simultaneously the *victims* and the *allies* of the dictatorship. Allies against whom? Against the mass of the people who were not only deprived of political rights, but also oppressed economically.

The absolute priority of political objectives over economic objectives was another characteristic feature of Stalin's dynamic and purposeful supraclass dictatorship. The grandiose role that Stalin sought to play in the arena of world politics demanded that all of the country's material and intellectual resources be strained toward *political* aims. Contrary to classical Marxist tenets, Stalin's political objectives were not a "superstructure" that grew out of a given socio-economic basis; quite the reverse, political considerations dictated the whole socio-economic course of the country. It is at this point that a major *internal contradiction* of the dictatorship leaps to view. Stalin's world-wide political aims demanded the creation of a powerful military and economic potential, consequently an ever increasing class of economic, technical and military bureaucrats. Since it was precisely from this quarter that he had to fear a potential competitor for political power, he needed periodically to delay and neutralize its consolidation through terror.

Only now is it becoming possible to foresee a Thermidorean convalescence from the violent fevers of Stalin's rule.[3] Up to now political power has stood above group interest, arbitrarily and capriciously exercised at the behest of a mad tyrant. As long as a potentially conservative class interested in the return of

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[1] N. S. Khrushchev, "The Cult of the Individual," (February 25, 1956), *The Anti-Stalin Campaign and International Communism*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1956, pp. 22-23. The proportion of liquidated members of, for example, the Central Committee and Politburo of July 1917 would be even higher.

[2] The Soviet privileged class can hardly be defined as a "state bourgeoisie" as was done by Hugh Seton-Watson in *Problems of Communism*, Vol. V, No. 3 (May-June 1956). In spite of all the similarities in taste, outlook, and way of life between it and the Western bourgeoisie there remains the fundamental difference that the Soviet privileged class was politically enslaved, not politically ascendant.

[3] The Thermidor was that period in the French Revolution that followed the rule of the revolutionary Jacobins, and saw the crystallization of a new privileged middle class.

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"quieter times" for the secure enjoyment of their privileges was unable to seize power in its hands, the hitherto normal Thermidorean reaction failed to materialize in Russia. During the period of the New Economic Policy (1921-1928) many experts were convinced that a flood of peasant masses would engulf the dictatorship and that an economically recovered peasantry would "grab the usurpers by the neck." The "slowing down" which they predicted on the basis of the normal operation of objective sociological laws was only averted by the intrusion of a "subjective factor": the determined purposefulness of the dictatorship acting in the name of the terrorized and silent party. The terror which resulted from the "subjective factor" reversed the normal course of events and prevented the crystallization of a political counterweight to the regime. The hopes for a Thermidorean conclusion to the Revolution revived when the industrialization of the country spawned legions of bureaucrats. However, the terror continued unabated, and the beheading of a generation of non-party and party bureaucrats once again eliminated a threat to the dictatorship.

The Bolshevik Road to a Supraclass State

IN varying degrees every modern dictatorship is characterized by a supraclass state organization. The degree of totalitarian perfection that it has achieved in Communist Russia is the result of definite historical and political causes.

First, as has been previously noted, Russian historians of various persuasions, including Marxists, have all recognized supraclass state power as a characteristic feature of the Russian prerevolutionary past.[4] However, the Tsarist autocracy appears strikingly naive compared to the terrible ruthlessness with which Stalin's dictatorship was exploited and maintained. The unique organizational structure and the no less unique credo of the Bolshevik Party made it an eminently well suited instrument for the establishment of the Stalinist supraclass dictatorship. The Leninist doctrine of "democratic centralism" is a particularly pernicious version of the Fuehrer principle tailored for the purposes of a dictatorial and hierarchal elite.[5] Moreover, the very idea of a "dictatorship of the proletariat" in a country where the working class formed less than three percent of the population presumed the imposition of a coercive rule by a tiny "vanguard" over an expectedly recalcitrant majority. In reality, even the idea of a "dictatorship of the proletariat" was from the beginning a mere fiction. The party, *acting in the name of the proletariat* not only assigned the latter a passive role *in practice,* making it an instrument for the narrow leadership by a "conscious minority"; in theory, too, the proletariat was only conceded the ability to achieve through its own power the much despised petit-bourgeois "unionism." [6]

Finally, the basic stages through which the Bolshevik power has passed in the process of its internal development and external expansion unfailingly consolidated Stalin's supraclass dictatorship. These stages were vividly described in the June 30th, 1956 "Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU on Overcoming the Cult of the Individual and its Consequences." This document, which purports to give a "Marxist explanation" of Stalin's crimes, does in fact list the correct reasons responsible for the rise of Stalinism. The Resolution points out that the Bolshevik Revolution, deprived of the possibility of moving westward, could only achieve goals that were commensurate with the given national resources by means of "iron discipline" and a "strict centralization of power." In view of the concrete historical conditions under which socialism in the USSR developed, and also "in view of subjective factors" (a euphemism for Stalin's maniacal personality), the dictatorship was forced to introduce a "temporary limitation of democracy." This "temporary limitation" of democracy resulted in the total enslavement not only of the whole Soviet people, but of the "ruling party" itself.

Post-Stalinist Shifts and Changes

THERE is good reason to believe that the inner contradictions of Stalin's supraclass dictatorship, referred to above, reached a new crisis during the last years of Stalin's life. About the time of the Nineteenth Party Congress (October 1952) ominous signs of a new purge, a new "surgical operation" by Stalin reappeared. The position of the party and non-party bureaucrats, men who desired a regime more amenable to their security and interests, became increasingly tense and precarious. The hysterical press campaign to in-

[4] The only exception is the dogmatic Marxist school of Pokrovsky.

[5] "Democratic centralism", "the guiding principle of the organizational structure of the party", is defined in the Party Rules (*Pravda*, October 14, 1956), as (a) the election of all leading party bodies, from lowest to the highest; (b) periodic reports of the party bodies to their party organizations; (c) strict party discipline and subordination of the minority to the majority; (d) the absolutely binding character of the decisions of higher bodies upon lower bodies.

[6] "The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness. . . ." V. I. Lenin, *What Is To Be Done,* New York International Publishers, 1929, pp. 32-33. It followed from this major premise of Lenin's leftist theory that the leadership of the party had to consist of a small circle of "professional revolutionaries welded to one another."

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tensify "Bolshevik vigilance," the impending trial of "doctor-poisoners," the liquidation of many of the most prominent Communists in satellite countries, the aggressive exacerbation of international tensions, all were calculated to serve as a *pretext* and *justification* for renewed terror and blood-letting in the Soviet Union. Finally, the degrading of Stalin's closest associates which was effected by the transformation of the 11-member Politburo into a 25-member Presidium, combined with the rest, was a sinister portent of a new "Yezhovshchina." [7] Fortunately for Stalin's henchmen, Stalin died at the "right time" and history did not repeat itself.

With the death of Stalin the supraclass and supraparty dictatorship began to reveal numerous cracks and weaknesses. Without an undisputed individual dictator, without terroristically enforced monolithic uniformity, decisions can only be made collectively as a result of deliberations and mutual compromises. No longer are the dissonant voices of conflicting interests represented in the leadership afraid to make themselves heard, and the absolute independence of the supraclass regime is undermined. The collective discussion of important problems of internal and external order, the expression of various, sometimes opposed views, and the compromise decisions cannot fail to bring about fluctuations and a slackening of the dynamism of power. The leadership is unavoidably penetrated to a certain extent and by features and habits characteristic of a "decayed democracy."

It goes without saying that since this development is the result of presumably opposed tendencies within the leadership, Soviet policy cannot be straightforward and consistent. A policy of concessions at home can be counterbalanced (in order to appease the die-hard Stalinists of the Molotov and Kaganovich type and perhaps the Army's high command) by dynamic steps in foreign policy, especially when they do not entail the menace of world conflict.

This is not the place for a detailed elaboration of the changes which have taken place during the last four years in the Soviet Union. In broad outline the deciding factor is the basic fact that groups enjoying material privileges who were formerly rendered powerless by Stalin's terror are beginning to acquire personal security and even, through party channels, a semblance of political representation and influence. Therefore, we may assume that the partial enfranchisement of the party and of a privileged class may, with the impeded progress of this development, result in a reconstitution of the regime as we have known it. What is in prospect is the transformation of the "supraclass"and "supraparty" regime into a "class" regime conducted in the interests of the privileged Soviet bureaucracy. This development by no means requires that the power of the Communist Party be renounced, or that the basic "ideological principles" and propaganda phraseology (at least in the initial stages) be radically changed. The enfranchised party might itself become an instrument of power for the politically enfranchised privileged class. The classical "Thermidorean" reaction would finally have arrived, expressing itself perhaps in the renunciation of Communist expansionism and a rational adjustment to national needs and possibilities.

[7] This term for terrorism derives from the name of the man who headed the bloody purges of 1937-1938—Nikolai Ivanovich Yezhov.

A Case of Pareto's Circulating Elite

THERE is no doubt that the vitality of Stalin's supraclass dictatorship can be partly accounted for by the consequences of the fundamental socio-economic transformations that followed in the wake of the revolution. The entire social and economic life of the country was unmoored from its traditional bases and presented a volatile spectacle that the Italian sociologist Vilfredo Pareto (1848—1923) would have described as a fast and relatively free circulation of the elites. Everywhere new men were carried to the summits of social and political status by colossal events, revolution, industrialization, collectivization. A vast heterogeneous bureaucracy was born of young and middle-aged generations who were tasting the first fruits of easy access to education which opened wide vistas of advancement. This is not the kind of soil in which opposition grows among potential elites, who under more confining social conditions could have successfully exploited the dissatisfactions of an expropriated and enslaved population. On the other hand, Stalin succeeded in politically atomizing the elites he had newly created, and in unsettling their normal development and stratification with periodic squalls of terror. Applied to the Stalinist era of villainy "political atomization" is, of course, a euphemism. Stalin not only atomized the elites politically, he exterminated them physically, at regular intervals, and in great numbers. This was Stalin's grim and, in its way, singular method of contributing to an "intensive circulation of the elites."

Once the materially privileged Soviet classes, formerly without political rights, become politically predominant and socially stabilized, the rate of circulation tends to drop off. Under any stable social system the privileged class protects its position from invasion by those that are beneath it. The prognosis for the present privileged class' ability to consolidate and defend its position becomes more favorable as it succeeds in prevail-

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ing upon the regime to adapt to national needs and to refrain from international adventures and utopian plans.

The "Lions" and the "Foxes"

UP to now the Soviet regime has contained a "happy combination" of Pareto's two basic types of the elite: the "foxes," supreme in the art of deception, manipulation and maneuver, and the "lions," firm, fanatic, and unhesitating in the use of force. The "lions" have figured predominantly during the Revolution, the Civil War, and all of the huge social and economic upheavals of Soviet history. Along with the "lions" came the multitudinous "foxes," the men of resource and intelligence, to administer the new life of the nation. These latter are the bureaucrats *par excellence,* represented (we may suppose) by such men as Mikoyan, Malenkov, Pervukhin and Saburov. With the death of Stalin and the increased prestige and power of the bureaucrats, we may be witnessing the decay of the classical lion-type Bolshevik, indeed the "debolshevization" of the regime. There is no question that the remaining "lions," the "Leninist core" of the Communist apparatus, are very much concerned about this matter. The question is whether they will be able to force a Stalinist solution of the problem.

It certainly seems that the increased power of the "foxes" is reflected in recent attempts by the Soviet leadership to deal with acute internal and external crises which they faced. The Hungarian national revolution was suppressed with brutality, but the hesitations that were noticeable in the actions of the Soviet leaders—at least initially—were apparently due to the reluctance of the "foxes" to use naked force. In the Polish and Middle Eastern crises the influence of a restraining and moderate hand is even more obvious. The "collective" resorts with increasing frequency to persuasion and political manipulation and maneuver, where the Stalinist supraclass dictatorship would have used merciless repression.

Thus a new light is thrown upon Communist "humanitarianism," particularly with regard to internal difficulties. There is a rising crescendo of complaints in the Soviet press about "anti-Soviet" manifestations by the youth, the students, and other "decayed elements." If these "decayed elements" now get off with expulsion from the universities or exile to the virgin lands instead of being shot or sent off to long terms in concentration camps, it is because we are witnessing the loss of the regime's "revolutionary vigilance" and dynamism. One may object that the Soviet regime showed weakness and hesitation even in the past, during Stalin's rule. This may be true as far as external threats were concerned. But for internal elements that evinced the slightest "anti-Soviet" character there was never a moment's hesitation, nor was there an ounce of mercy. Of course, it cannot be ruled out there will be a return to Stalin's grim methods—particularly if the regime feels *directly* threatened by continued internal relaxation: that much the events of the past forty years have undoubtedly demonstrated. Nevertheless, it is safe to assume that the collective leadership, which survived and directly participated in the development of totalitarian Stalinism, is aware of the fact that a return to a one-man dictatorship may mean their political and possibly physical liquidation. A one-man supraclass and supraparty dictatorship

PROBLEMS OF COMMUNISM

denounced by PRAVDA

In the last issue we reprinted a critical comment which had appeared in the Soviet newspaper *Sovetskaia Rossia* with regard to this magazine. We invited its editors to single out examples of our alleged "falsification" and offered to publish their explanation of where we were in error, on condition that they would give the same treatment to our reply. Thus far, we have heard nothing from *Sovetskaia Rossia,* but in the interim *Pravda* has come out with some new remarks that will be of interest to our readers. Here is the passage, which was part of a general attack on the U.S. Information Agency:

Of particular interest is a magazine . . . pretentiously entitled Problems of Communism. *This magazine . . . is designed for "neutrals," that is, those countries which refuse to follow in the footsteps of American policy. It goes without saying that there is not a grain of communism in that magazine [sic!]. It is a communism that exists only in the imagination of American gangsters of the pen, paid informers and renegades, who fill its pages with malicious fabrications and slander.*

In a sense, we must confess that *Pravda's* attack has relieved our minds. Somehow, the completely uncharacteristic lack of vituperation in the earlier criticism, which merely charged us with "crude falsification" of the "teachings of scientific socialism and conditions in socialist countries," was disturbing. Now that *Pravda* has spoken in the old, familiar vein of Soviet journalism, we know at least that all's right with the Soviet world. Needless to say, we extend to *Pravda's* editors the same invitation as to *Sovetskaia Rossia.*

—The Editors, Problems of Communism

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would also involve the collective leadership in a host of new and complex problems.

Can Stalinism Return?

THE Leninist-Communist point of view provided a perfect historical, political and psychological rationale for Stalin's single-minded pursuit of power in the 1930's. The "primitive accumulation" of capital necessary for "building communism" in a backward agrarian country was performed under fire and in the presence of a sometimes real, sometimes mythical "enemy encirclement." The main industrial basis was to be created by barbaric methods without consideration of losses in manpower and technical efficiency and under conditions of extremely low productivity. Expansion did occur, at times rather impressive, but it was an expansion mainly in *width.* However, the further development of the economic power of the Soviet Union is connected with a development in *depth,* with increased worker productivity.

The USSR is now entering a period when the generation born during the deficit birth-rate war years is joining the ranks of the industrial working force. This decreased labor force will prevent the former improvident waste of human resources and make high productivity a condition for further economic growth. The need to increase productivity remains one of the great dilemmas of the Soviet economy. Approximately 48 percent of the population remains engaged in agriculture. Here the situation is no better than in industry. The appeal by the party's Central Committee to *kolkhoz* and *sovkhoz* workers in January 1956 revealed that "in many areas of Russia favored by climatic conditions the average yield per hectare does not exceed three to four centners." [8]

High productivity (not only in selected industrial and agricultural enterprises, but in the economy as a whole) presupposes an orientation by the regime directed towards the interests of those immediately engaged in production. Living conditions must be made better, a certain minimum of freedom and initiative must be granted to those concerned, and the bureaucratic economic apparatus must be decentralized. This is the road that the leadership is now following with some hesitation and backtracking. In this respect the decisions of the last plenum of the Central Committee are especially significant: a considerable degree of decentralization of industry and increased power for managers and planners on a local level was provided in them.[9]

There can be no doubt that the "Leninist core" of the leadership which is being forced to follow this road is aware of the dangers for the regime that lurk upon it. The more power that they surrender, the more consolidated the position of a bureaucratic political counterweight to the regime becomes.

While a return to the supraclass, supraparty totalitarian dictatorship is extremely difficult psychologically, politically and economically, a "slowdown" and consequent transformation of the regime into the "class" rule of the privileged bureaucracy threatens the decay and slow degeneration of the regime. Therefore, under the present conditions, the "middle course" personified by Khrushchev and Bulganin, which combines simultaneous fidelity to orthodox Bolshevism in some cases and a policy of necessary concessions in others, was destined to triumph in the collective leadership. They continue to pursue an internal policy of the "predominant development of heavy industry" and a foreign policy of aggressive expansionism. At the same time they make the concessions necessary to raise the productivity of the Soviet economy and to satisfy the aspirations of the privileged bureaucracy upon whom such a rise depends.

The time has not yet arrived either for the full-fledged Stalinists of the Molotov or Kaganovich type, or for the proponents of the interests of the privileged bureaucracy like Mikoyan or Malenkov. Since they are the protagonists of a more radical change of policy in a certain direction their coming to power may usher in a more acute and profound crisis in the dictatorship.

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[8] *Pravda,* January 19 and 21, 1957. It should be added that the average yield in prerevolutionary Russia was as high as 11 centners per hectare. Western European methods of intensive soil exploitation have brought the yield up to 25 centners.

[9] *Pravda,* February 16, 1957. As has become known from Khrushchev's latest economic thesis (*Pravda,* April 4, 1957) decentralization is being carried even further.

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The New Soviet Generation

EDITORS' NOTE: Recent events have clearly shown that youth unrest constitutes a perennial thorn in the side of any dictatorship, whether of the right or left. However zealous may have been its original support, it is youth which becomes most quickly dissatisfied with the spurious values and empty promises of a totalitarian state and which tends to express this dissatisfaction first by passive rejection of, and eventually by active opposition to, the political claims of the regime.

The youth problem in the Soviet Union is both social and political. For forty years the regime has tried to instill in Soviet youth a spirit of selfless devotion to the task of "building socialism" and has rationalized the untold human misery and suffering, the stamping out of freedom and individualism, which this task entailed, in terms of "the glorious Communist future." The rewards, however, have been meager, and it is no wonder that the youth have turned, in apathy and cynicism, to the pursuit of personal satisfactions—to the "good life" that has so long been denied them. This is the social aspect of the youth problem, with which Mr. Kassof deals in the first of the two articles which follow.

But, in a totalitarian system, *no* problem can long remain non-political. For the values imposed by the regime are all determined by political goals and principles, even in the realms of literature, the arts and sciences, education, and human relations; and any defiance of them is viewed by the dictatorship as a challenge to its basic political objectives. Often the nonconformism displayed by Soviet youth, though rife with political implications, is restricted to economic or social demands. More and more, however, discontent and unrest, especially among the educated, are assuming political forms. It is this *consciously* political unrest, so dangerous to the totalitarian system, that is analyzed in the second article.

"The youth is our future, our hope," said Stalin in 1933. Russia's future may, indeed, belong to her youth, but as the following studies suggest, it may be a rather different sort of future from that which Stalin envisioned.

Youth vs. the Regime: Conflict in Values

By ALLEN KASSOF

ONE of the critical tests of a totalitarian system is its ability to control and enlist the support of its youth. Political dictatorships may plan and design, but the future holds serious threats for them if they cannot influence and manipulate the minds of the new generation. Because of this, the emergence of a youth problem on the Soviet scene ranks as one of the more intriguing and significant developments of the post-Stalin era.

The youth problem is complex. It has taken various outward forms, ranging from hooliganism and juvenile delinquency, long under attack in the Soviet press,[1] to more recent signs of political and intellectual unrest among groups of university students in the course of the past year's turmoil. Different as these manifestations are, they all contribute evidence of a growing current of discontent among Soviet youth.

Underlying the discontent is a serious erosion of officially approved and prescribed attitudes toward Soviet

This paper is based on a broader study of Soviet youth policy in which the author is currently engaged as a Graduate Student Fellow at the Russian Research Center, Harvard University. A Ford Foundation Fellowship in Soviet and East European Area studies made possible the initial phases of the study, and gave the author an opportunity for direct observations on a visit to the USSR in May 1956.

[1] See Mark G. Field, "Drink and Delinquency in the USSR", *Problems of Communism*, May-June, 1955, pp. 29-38.

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life, and their replacement by ideas and behavior which are inimical to the maintenance of the system as the regime would prefer it. A broad spectrum of values and beliefs is affected, but the author has selected for analysis one trouble area viewed with particular gravity by the Soviet authorities, to judge from their worried reaction.

The New Leisure Ethic

THAT problem is the erosion of what may be summarized as the production ethic—a moral position, promulated by the regime, which holds labor and production to be positive values *per se*. The philosophical roots of the concept can be traced in part to the preeminent position which Marxian thought accords to labor and its products. A more practical interpretation, however, sees its origins in the program of forced industrialization in the Soviet Union. He who is willing to produce much and consume little—thereby contributing to the rapid growth of the "material base of socialism"—is the hero.

Opposed to this kind of orientation is a set of values which can be called the consumption or leisure ethic, and which is anathema to Soviet ideology. It involves the assumption that leisure and consumption are the higher values, and that productive efforts are simply means to the greater end of consumption. The Soviets describe such an outlook as evil, immoral, and even counterrevolutionary.

Part of what seems to be happening among Soviet youth is a shift in the new generation away from acceptance of the production ethic and toward the attractions of the leisure ethic as a way of life. The official label for this phenomenon is *bezdelnichestvo,* or idleness, although—as will be shown—it involves a good deal more. The culprits who engage in it are variously described as loafers, good-for-nothings, petit-bourgeois souls, and parasites.

While the forces which have produced *bezdelnichestvo* date far back in the history of the Soviet system, it has emerged as a full-blown problem only in recent years. The growing concern felt by the authorities has been evidenced in a public campaign of "anti-idleness" propaganda, waged intermittently since shortly after Stalin's death, and in a number of other combative steps (to be discussed later). The consequence has been a steady flow of complaints about the laziness and waywardness of youth in the Soviet press, particularly in the organ of the Young Communist League, *Komsomolskaia Pravda.* Although cases cited differ in detail from one report to the next, the general implication of comment is that members of the younger generation are showing reluctance to work when, where, and how the regime wants them to.

A report from Yaroslavl Province is typical of the purport of these articles, although it is unusual in that it gives actual statistics:

> In 1955, 6500 students were graduated from the secondary schools of Yaroslavl Province (not counting the schools for young working people). What happened next in their lives? A total of 1290 of them were admitted to higher educational institutions, 1800 to technicums and 1270 to technical schools. The remaining 2140 did not continue their studies. Some of them are working in enterprises or agriculture. But the majority of them are hanging around doing nothing.[2]

Allowing the barest possible "majority" of the 2140 students who did not go on to further education, a quick calculation shows that almost 17 percent of the original 6500 graduates were "hanging around" jobless. This is a high percentage in an economy which is bent on rapid expansion, and in which the doctrine of work has been raised officially to the level of religious dogma. That a like situation prevails in other areas of the USSR is indicated by an increasing volume of press complaints from widespread sources.

The problem of "idling" is not limited to secondary school graduates; much of the official criticism is leveled at older youths who get through the universities or other advanced educational facilities but then fail to seek jobs—or at least the jobs in which the regime wants them. Khrushchev himself has complained that many university-trained specialists, educated at great expense to the government, have been taking jobs as "floor polishers." The scoffing explanation which he offered was that students chose their institutes by "picking slips of paper" from a hat, only to discover at the end of their training that they were not "suited" to their fields of specialization.[3] What he did not add was that many such youths specialize in "unsuitable" studies because they must choose fields in which enrollment is open as their only access to advanced education.

Another explanation—and an important aspect of the whole "idleness" problem—is the reluctance of youth to work in remote areas or in the countryside. The attempts of young people to stay in the city at all costs, even at the sacrifice of professional jobs, has been a striking phenomenon.[4] In particular, there is

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[2] *Izvestia,* July 1, 1956, p. 1. Translation from *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* Vol. VIII, No. 26, p. 25. CDSP also carries translations of a number of source materials quoted further in this article.

[3] *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* June 7, 1956, p. 1.

[4] The present author can testify from first-hand contact to the strength of young people's reluctance to take rural assignments. On a trip to the USSR in 1956, he met a group of university graduates in Kiev who explained that rather than engage in their specialties in the countryside, they and many of their companions had taken jobs as store clerks.

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evidence that it has created embarrassing obstacles in the recruitment of both skilled and unskilled labor for the regime's bold "New Lands" program, which aims at the agricultural development of vast new areas in Central Asia. Soviet propaganda points to this project as an example of how young citizens sacrifice themselves to the call of party and state. But reports of youth's "enthusiasm" to go to the East have been supplemented by bitter complaints that too few people are volunteering and by directives to the Young Communist League to round up more manpower.[5]

Rationalizations and Realities

THE Soviet explanation for these and similar phenomena is that they are "survivals *(perezhitki)* of capitalism". At best, the explanation is a hollow one. The Soviet regime is not dealing with people who have their own memories of a different way of life, but with adolescents or young adults who were born after Stalinism already held full sway. Furthermore, it has had forty years to remold youth by means of one of the most intensive and extensive youth programs known to history. The system of formal education is a tool in the hands of party and government. The Young Communist League and the Young Pioneers have an absolute monopoly over organized youth activities and are, in turn, controlled by the party. Hardly a channel of achievement, expression, or learning is open to the young Soviet citizen without his meeting and being influenced by some aspect of this total youth program.

The doctrine of work and sacrifice and production has been a fundamental tenet of this program. Soviet youngsters are told over and over again:

> For us, labor is one of the highest moral qualities and values. We should educate the active member of the collective of toilers, and only the person who is a laboring person, who makes the goal of his life labor for the good of the motherland, can be such a member.[6]

In the face of this intensive indoctrination, the recent signs of youth's resistance or indifference to the production ethic assume serious significance. It should not be inferred, of course, that the present trend has affected the whole or even a majority of the youth population. Most Soviet young people probably conform to a greater or lesser extent with the demands of the system; some of them do so out of genuine belief, others because they stand to benefit from a display of conformity, still others because they simply know no alternative. What is important, however—and what has the authorities worried—is the compelling evidence that *bezdelnichestvo* and the attitudes behind it are spreading, despite all of the forces of coercion and persuasion at the regime's command. In the face of such evidence, manifestations of this "un-Soviet" attitude cannot be explained away as "survivals" of a social order which existed almost half a century ago. The sources of the problem must be traced to the present-day realities of Soviet life.

The Spread of Skepticism

PERHAPS the most basic reality of life under the Soviet system is the drab poverty which is the lot of the great mass of citizenry. One easily traceable source of *bezdelnichestvo* is the determination of many young people not to be drawn into the vortex of unrelieved labor for minimal reward. In secondary school graduates particularly, this determination seems to have produced an all-or-nothing attitude: they attach desperate importance to further education as a means to "better themselves"—among those who cannot get it, there are apparently a substantial number who end up as genuine idlers, if not worse.

The Soviet author Korneichuk, speaking at the last Ukrainian CP Congress, addressed himself precisely to this problem. He deplored the tendency of Soviet youth to shy away from necessary if unglamorous jobs, and suggested that the idleness which ensued when secondary school graduates preferred to do nothing if they could not have further education was the cause of Soviet juvenile delinquency and hooliganism.[7]

In Moscow last year, the present writer asked the Editorial Board of the Children's Publishing House to name what it considered to be the single most serious problem among Soviet youth. Again the answer given was the growing refusal of young people to take routine jobs. A spokesman added that the Publishing House was just then planning a campaign in its book program "to convince children that not everyone needs to go to the university, that all work is worthy of the Soviet citizen."

To return to the case of Yaroslavl youth, *Izvestia* stated elsewhere in its report that many of the unemployed youngsters who decided to "hang around" did so because they had been turned down for advanced study; they wanted to wait another year for a chance to try again, and in the interim they refused to be drawn into productive work. The writer justified their inability to gain access to further education in the following terms:

> Everyone realizes that higher educational institutions cannot admit the entire, immense body of secondary school

[5] *Pravda,* May 19, 1956, p. 1.

[6] P. N. Shimbirev, I. T. Ogorodnikov, *Pedagogika, uchebnik dlia pedagogicheskikh institutov* (Pedagogy, a textbook for pedagogical institutes), Moscow, 1954, p. 252.

[7] *Pravda Ukrainy,* January 23, 1956, p. 4.

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Caption: How certain school graduates imagine their future life. (Label reads "Matriculation certificate.)

—From *Krokodil* (Moscow), April 30, 1956.

graduates. Moreover, it is unnecessary that they should do so. Who would then work in the plants and the factories; who would grow the grain and build the houses?[8]

In a complex industrial society, where a variety of skills is needed short of the advanced training level, this is an entirely reasonable view. Not everyone can be an engineer or a doctor or a scientist. Yet the Soviet regime has itself to blame for young people's attitudes: it has created a system in which skilled or professional standing—and hence advanced training—is of critical importance in determining how well or poorly one lives. In an economy which is characterized by perennial shortages of even the most basic consumer goods, not to mention the amenities of life, education or training beyond the secondary school can be crucial. It can spell the difference between a relatively comfortable existence, in which the prerequisites of consumption and leisure are available to a degree, and the abysmal, have-not existence of the great majority of Soviet citizens holding unskilled jobs. Important too, are the less tangible benefits of prestige and status accorded to the university-trained career man or woman. For all its talk about the glory of "simple labor," the Soviet regime has created, through its social and economic policies, a rigid new system of privilege and class stratification which bears little resemblance to the original Marxist ideal of equalitarian society.

Soviet youth know this for the reality. It may be possible to convince them that black is white on issues and in areas which do not directly concern their daily lives. But the regime's ubiquitous system of differential rewards affects every citizen for better or worse; doublethink cannot cover it up—nor the publicity given to a few well-paid "heroes of socialist labor."

Reflected in the set of attitudes just described is a broader and potentially more serious issue confronting the regime—one, indeed, which lies at the core of the whole youth problem. That is the growing skepticism of young people concerning regime propaganda and promises. The work-and-production slogans which the regime has been hammering into its citizenry for a quarter century have been based on the implicit or explicit promise of future reward: the ultimate purpose of all sacrifice was to make possible a better life, if not indeed a utopia. Accordingly, through successive Five-Year Plans since the end of the 1920's the Soviet people have tightened their belts with the promise of better things to come. The growth of Soviet industrial might during these years has been impressive, but the direct and visible returns to the people who built it have increased very little. All that the regime has offered has been more promises.

[8] *Izvestia, loc. cit.*

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Promises work well for longer or shorter periods of time, but they have an annoying way of coming home to roost. Soviet teenagers know from their elders and in part from their own experience just how elusive the carrot of reward has been. To some extent, then, *bezdelnichestvo* can be seen as a sign that the present generation is growing impatient to cash in on some of the past promises, and is refusing to accept new ones.

By persisting in preaching platitudes which have no relation to things as they are, the Soviet leadership probably only further undermines belief in its slogans and in its good faith. As long as the discrepancy between words and reality continues, there will be pressures on some people to become "idlers" instead of doing their "holy duty" by the party and the state. They are all too aware that their rewards for such a sacrifice are likely to be—more words.

The City and the Leisure Ethic

THERE is some paradox in the fact that secondary school students desperately seek further education in an effort to avoid routine jobs, while some of their elder brothers with advanced training have taken precisely such jobs to avoid assignment in their specialties in remote areas. Yet underlying both manifestations of *bezdelnichestvo,* the same attitudes are discernible—on one hand, a negative rejection of Soviet values, and on the other, a groping quest for a better life, denied by the present system.

To escape from the countryside is, for some, to escape from the more blatant discrepancies between what the system demands and what it gives in return. Implicit in this attitude is a strong orientation toward the city as a symbol of leisure and the better life. The Soviet city may be grey and grim by Western standards, but it is infinitely better than the outlying areas. The city not only has more consumer goods—the material substance of the good life—but also offers cultural and social facilities, such as theatres, amusement parks, restaurants, concerts, and other diversions for pursuit in leisure hours. One can become current with the latest fashions and ideas, with the talk of other young people. There are places like the Hotel Astoria in Leningrad, or the Metropole in Moscow, where one can join the smart set in dancing to Western tunes. With enough money, it is even possible to join the generals and important bureaucrats at Kiev's Dynamo Restaurant, drinking Soviet champagne. Why be an agronomist working on a *kolkhoz* when with enough effort it is possible to get a job at one of the city offices of the Ministry? Who wants to work as a new doctor at a small clinic in a remote area when there is a chance to be in Moscow and walk down Broadway (or Broadvei, as the young call fashionable Gorki Street) on a warm spring evening, looking at expensive goods in the shop windows. The city is the place to be. It is civilized. Haven't the schools taught that the whole point of communism is to enable people to live better? If it is necessary to resort to evasion and subterfuge to live better, well, that's just the way life is. One has to learn how to beat the system.

"Western" Allurements

THE extreme development of such attitudes is to be seen in the *stilyagi,* young city people whose reaction against regime preachments finds it outlet in a form of exhibitionist behavior. Though they are in a small minority, there is a clue in their exaggeration of the leisure ethic to the general trends in youth outlook and behavior which have the regime worried. The *stilyagi* are young people whose lives are devoted to the quest for pleasure, and whose basic philosophy is to get away with the minimum amount of work while enjoying available luxuries to the hilt. Those who can manage it pay for their indulgences not by working for them, but out of allowances from parents, student stipends, or even the proceeds of speculation. In a conspicuous display of what they consider to be "sophistication," they also affect bizarre styles of dress and grooming, such as loud-checked padded jackets, shoes a size too big, and elaborate haircuts.

Involved in some of the *stilyagi's* behavior is a clumsy attempt to imitate what they believe to be Western culture. From their fragmentary knowledge of the West, they single out for admiration those elements which they associate with "having a good time"—American jazz, Western styles of dancing, the cocktail hour, *etc.* They also adopt English nicknames and affect English slang. However distorted this view of Western life might be, the *stilyagi's* identification of the "good life" with things foreign is a measure of their disillusionment over things at home. In the present context, what is important is not their extremism but what underlies it—disdain for the official Soviet virtues, and defiant insistence on a kind of "individuality," and a frantic effort to achieve the easier life here and now.

The Soviets themselves have admitted that it is not so much the outward behavior of the *stilyagi* which disturbs them as the attitudes which give rise to it. *Komsomolskaia Pravda* gives an amusing and highly informative typology of *stilyagi* to demonstrate that while surface characteristics may differ from one to another, it is essentially the attitude which makes the *stilyag.* One type is described:

If he is Boris, he calls himself Bob, and if he is Ivan, he calls himself John. He lives off his parents and "burns"

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his money in restaurants. Sometimes he is registered as a student but he "despises" cramming and crammers and therefore does not study. He "adores" everything foreign and is ready to give his right arm for a fashionable [phonograph] record . . . He is disillusioned with life.

A second *stilyag* is caricatured as a fellow who

. . . began working, but the work turned out to be "uninteresting" and his coworkers were "crude" people who lacked "understanding" and "sensitivity." He sent in his resignation. Nobody tried to stop him. Insulted, he returned to the bosom of his family, and . . . [rested] a year or so . . .

On another type the paper comments:

If he works, it is without enthusiasm and only to have a good reputation.

But the essence of the matter, says *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* is that while some *stilyagi* work and others do not, "all of them have the same attitude towards work—they don't like it." [9]

The Problems of Privilege

DIFFERENT from the *stilyagi,* but sharing many of their attitudes, are some children of the privileged classes. The Soviet press almost never prints anything that can be classified as scandal, but last August, *Komsomolskaia Pravda* printed an expose of the misbehavior of a group—the children of high officials—who had been indulging in dissolute and drunken orgies.[10] Their good times had been supported in part by stealing belongings from their parents' apartments. Investigators in the case concluded that the fault was the parents', who thought that "if their children had good clothes, food and amusements, the rest would come by itself." The paper added:

It had never occurred to any of the youths that they would have to work in a factory or at a construction project. They were certain that they were made for a different sort of life.

Interestingly enough, the threat of punishment which these parents used when attempting to discipline their children was: "If you behave badly, I shall go to the militia and ask them to send you to the virgin lands."

Though the above case is extreme it is symptomatic of a trend among youths who have enjoyed material advantages. An official of one youth organization in Moscow gave the following explanation, paraphrased below, when the writer asked her for her view of this aspect of the Soviet youth problem:

Our problem children are the offspring of successful professional people and officials who have made their way in the world the "hard way" and who now want their children to have an easier time of it. Being busy professional people, they do not have sufficient time to give their children, who therefore suffer from neglect. Furthermore, they give their children too much spending money and, in general, spoil them. These children do not know the value of an honest day's labor, and want only to have a good time.

It is an interesting bit of irony that the "best" Soviet people are doing so much to undermine the regime's youth program. But in a sense the regime itself made the bed in which it now sleeps so uncomfortably. The above-discussed system of incentives and differential rewards instituted in the 1930's, which has been substantially responsible for the emergence of the present privileged classes, was aimed at encouraging the population to work harder and produce more. Broadly speaking, the people who were most responsive to this pressure, or whose previous background allowed them to

A SOVIET COMMENT ON "IDLERS"

Above is a propaganda poster photographed in Kiev last year by the author. The inscription, in Ukrainian, reads: Falko Edvard, born in 1937, works nowhere, studies nowhere. Supported by his father, N. M. Lvkovsky, Candidate of Medical Sciences, Head of the Department of Dermatology; and by his mother, D. M. Voloshina, junior assistant at the Academy of Science of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. He goes aimlessly through the city; his father will clothe him, his mother will feed him—they have brought up a "specialist" who cares not a fig for anything.

[9] *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* August 11, 1956, p. 2.

[10] *Ibid.,* August 15, 1956, p. 2.

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seize the advantage offered, are the ones who are now on top—successful factory managers, skilled engineers, and so forth. Yet they, in turn, are producing in their offspring just the opposite of the attitudes which the regime needs in its program of rapid industrialization. Because they can afford to give their children an easy time, the latter are not forced into channels of occupational achievement to obtain the comforts of life.

The Growing Tide

AMONG the *stilyagi* and among overprivileged children, then, one sees the sharpest expression of "un-Soviet" attitudes. But while their flaunted allegiance to the leisure ethic makes them a ready target for criticism and attack in the official press, they constitute only a small minority of young people. From the point of view of the regime, they are important not as a threat to the system in themselves, but as the extreme expression of attitudes toward work and life observable, if less obviously manifested, in broader elements of the youth population. As has been shown, it is significant numbers of generally average young citizens who are the real "problem children" for the authorities and who are behind the increasing volume of press complaints across a wide area of the USSR.

To cite a few such complaints: *Kazakhstanskaia Pravda* protests at the large number of people in Kazakhstan, "especially youth," who have "false bottoms"—that is, who pretend to live by Soviet values for the sake of outward appearance, but who, it is charged, share the worst features of the *stilyagi* and other idlers.[11] In Georgia, *Bakinskii Rabochii* reports that the Young Communist League considers young people who "do absolutely no work at all" a key problem for solution.[12] In Vilna, laments *Sovetskaia Litva,* it is "annoying to see" how many university graduates refuse to go to work.[13] From Estonia comes the charge that secondary school graduates are shirkers and slackers, that rather than do their share in the difficult tasks of the Soviet economy, they prefer to "sit out their time at home". When the call comes to go to the New Lands, the charge continues, they prefer to go "visiting grandmother".[14]

These are the young people who are supposed to be the "New Soviet Men", the "fearless builders of communism". The fact that many of them are turning away from the tasks at hand is perhaps the most eloquent testimony to the apathy and even skepticism which they feel about what they are supposed to be building.

[11] *Kazakhstanskaia Pravda,* December 20, 1956, p. 2.
[12] *Bakinskii Rabochii,* October 24, 1956, p. 1.
[13] *Sovetskaia Litva,* November 14, 1956, p. 2.
[14] *Sovetskaia Estonia,* September 25, 1956, p. 2.

The extent of the regime's concern over the present situation is evidenced not only in press reportage but in a number of groping efforts it has made to deal with the problem of *bezdelnichestvo.* These measures are important both because they afford an index of regime thinking on the problem and because they will in part determine the outcome.

Attempts at a Solution

THUS FAR, combative efforts have taken four different avenues of approach. One consists of more of the same barrage of words and slogans which provided the materials for the present analysis. In newspapers, in books, at Young Communist League meetings and in the classroom, Soviet youngsters continue to be told, with renewed emphasis, that their first duty is to act at the bidding of party and state. True communism is still just around the corner, but in the meantime everyone will have to continue working as hard as ever. If it means going straight to work upon graduation from secondary school—too bad. The guiding principle of life is sacrifice to the cause, not personal happiness or comfort, and the reward is the knowledge that one is doing his part in a program formulated by all-wise leaders.

A second attempt at solution, although it stems from pressures far broader than the youth problem itself, has been the policy of minor wage equalizations, raising the minimum rewards and in some cases reducing the higher ones.[15] If the author's analysis of the roots of *bezdelnichestvo* has been correct, then it is possible that further moves in this direction might persuade some "idlers" to abandon thought of advanced education in favor of going directly to work for better wages. As yet, however, such moves have been only token gestures, and there is no solid evidence that any further shift in wage policy is contemplated.

A third approach, apparently still in the talking stages, was suggested by Khrushchev in an address to a group of young people bound for construction projects in Siberia. He said:

> **We are convinced that the time is not far off when higher educational institutions will recruit their students from factories, construction projects, collective farms, MTS, and state farms.**

Later he added:

> **I say . . . this to you so that you will not think that by going off to the construction projects you will lose the opportunity for a higher education.[16]**

[15] "Decree on the Wages of Lower Paid Workers and Employees", *Pravda,* September 9, 1956, p. 1. See also the discussion on lowering certain scientists' pay in *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* March 20, 1956, p. 2.
[16] *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* June 7, 1956, p. 1.

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If such a recruitment policy were indeed put into effect, its result would be to force all secondary school graduates into productive occupations as a prerequisite for further education. Thus Khrushchev's statement contained overtones of both threat—in its hint of a coercive program to come—and bribery, reflecting the quandary in which the regime finds itself.

A few provisions have already been made to emphasize recruitment of candidates for higher education from among youths who have worked "in production" for two or more years. However this limited program falls far short of the change intimated by Khrushchev, and its results thus far have been dubbed "insignificant." [17]

The fourth effort at a solution is longer-range in scope and attempts to forestall in future generations the kind of development which we have discussed here. It is aimed not only at the problem of *bezdelnichestvo*. but at the whole erosion of values among youth. At its core is the regime's program to create *shkoly internaty*, or boarding schools, first announced at the Twentieth CPSU Congress in February 1956. At that time it was not clear just what the nature of these new schools would be or from which groups they would draw their enrollment. In subsequent months, however, it has become evident that the boarding schools are intended to allow for a fresh start in indoctrinating Soviet youth. Eventually the regime plans to replace the entire existing system of primary and secondary education with the *shkoly internaty*. Although the plan aims in part at improvements in curriculum and instruction, its real goal is to exert greater control over the early formation of basic attitudes and outlooks in young Soviet citizens.

> The pupils will remain in the boarding schools, making it possible to make these schools the true center of Communist upbringing.[18]

"Communist upbringing" includes the eradication of "incorrect attitudes" towards labor, and their replacement by the "right" kinds of ideas:

> Education in the boarding schools should be combined with productive work. Labor in all its forms should occupy an important place in the students' daily lives.[19]

The boarding school system is already out of the planning stage; in fact, a small number of the schools were opened for the current academic year.[20] The intention is to effect a gradual conversion of existing facilities by constructing dormitories to go with them. In the meantime:

> . . . with the new system of education in its initial stages, efforts should be focused on sending children aged 7 to 17—the most impressionable age—to boarding schools. Of course, this does not mean that we will not have complete boarding schools, including nurseries and kindergartens . . . Such institutions will exist, but there will be relatively few of them at first.[21]

Plans calling for the construction of dormitories for virtually the entire school-age population border on the incredible in a country whose economy has not even provided for minimum residential housing needs. It will be many years, if ever, before the Soviets come anywhere near realizing such a program. However, the very fact that it was adopted despite serious problems of implementation emphasizes the urgency with which the regime views its need to reinforce its hold over the youth.

* * *

It remains to be seen whether the techniques of persuasion and control envisaged in these measures will be effective in stemming the erosion of the production ethic and the growth of *bezdelnichestvo*. Their main significance for the present is the proof they offer of regime fears that Soviet youth will not maintain faith in the system without special pushes and pressures from above. In the case of the boarding schools, for example, the reasoning seems to be that if Soviet youths are becoming tarnished in their contact with the realities of Soviet life, then isolate them from the realities.

If these measures fail of achievement, then the Soviet authorities could have a very serious problem on their hands. The implications of the present situation are numerous, and there is space left to discuss only the most important of them. Critical among the more immediate and practical consequences facing the regime is the possible threat to its control over manpower. Under a planned economic system, the reluctance or refusal of a sector of the population to do what it is supposed to do could cause, at the least, minor disruptions in the execution of economic programs. If the trend were to spread further, it could contribute to a serious slowing down of the whole blueprint of industrial expansion.

The potential long-range consequences are even more important. Today's idlers are not old *kulaks* who can be disposed of when they resist the regime's policy: they are tomorrow's adults. If, despite the aid of its ambitious youth program, the regime fails to maintain a grip over the attitudes and aspirations of its young people,

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[17] Novye Pravila Priema v VUZY", (The New Rules of Admission to Higher Educational Institutions), *Molodoi Kommunist*, No. 3 ,1957, pp. 86-9.

[18] *Uchitelskaia Gazeta*, June 27, 1956, p. 2.

[19] *Ibid*.

[20] *Trud*, July 27, 1956, p. 2.

[21] *Pravda*, June 28, 1956, p. 2.

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then a crucial threat is posed to Soviet totalitarianism precisely by reducing its totality of control.

As has been pointed out, *bezdelnichestvo* is only one area in which erosion is taking place. A final note should be added with reference to other ramifications of the youth problem—in particular, to the recent astonishing reports of unrest among university students. Do they mean that some of the underlying tensions which have been highlighted in this paper are being transformed into nonconformity of a specifically political nature? If so, then the problems posed by *bezdelnichestvo* could be only the first signs of a domestic threat as potentially grave as any the Soviet system has faced.

So far, the only significant response which the regime has found for these problems, actual and potential, has been a reassertion of its control from above; it dares not assume that young citizens will choose the "Soviet" path from a sense of inner conviction. Perhaps this is a final measure of the faith of the present Soviet rulers in their own system.

Patterns of Nonconformity

By S. V. and P. UTECHIN

OF all the dramatic developments affecting and transforming the Soviet scene since the death of Stalin, perhaps none has been as interesting nor as pregnant with significance as the emergent signs of widespread unrest among Soviet youth. By unrest is meant a variety of "deviations" from the normal pattern of behavior expected and—insofar as possible—enforced by the Soviet government. According to reports reaching the outside world, such nonconformist attitudes have been manifested in various elements of the youth population. The most spectacular demonstrations of disaffection, however, have come from university students and young intellectuals. It is with this crucial and most articulate segment of youth that the present paper mainly deals, examining first the forms which unrest has taken, and secondly, the content and political import of the protests which students have voiced.

Because of the critical implications of the youth problem, a few words must be said about sources used. Most of the information cited has come directly from the Soviet press. On the most serious manifestations of unrest, however, the Soviet authorities have resorted with more than usual vigor to the tactics of distortion and outright suppression of news. The authors have therefore relied to some extent on published reports of recent visitors to the USSR, many of whom established contacts with youths and some of whom were eye-witnesses to protest activity. Other secondary sources have been used only when cross-checking indicated they were reliable, even though in certain cases the original source had to remain unidentified. A few unauthenticated or doubtful reports have been so labeled. Worth special mention because of the interest it has aroused is a lengthy letter written by a Moscow university student, describing youth protest in Moscow and Leningrad; this letter was received and translated by a correspondent of the Austrian journal *Forum,* where it was published in February 1957.[1] Although the student remains anonymous for obvious reasons, the minute details and documentation of the events he describes, in many cases indirectly corroborated in the Soviet press, makes the authenticity of the account incontestable.

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The Vehicles of Protest

IN a society which for years has known no other outlet for discontent or apathy than a kind of veiled and passive nonconformism, the reported eruptions of student tension over the past year and a half have been astonishing in the extreme. The build-up of protest activity can best be seen as a series of progressively bolder and more outspoken reactions on the part of the university population, although the different forms of unrest to be described have in many cases been going on simultaneously.

The simplest form of deviation has consisted in students absenting themselves from lectures on a scale which precludes treating the problem as a matter of

[1] Vol. IV, No. 38; hereafter referred to as the *Forum* letter.

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individual whim. Thus, it was reported in March 1956 that since the September of the previous year there had been mass absenteeism from lectures at Tiflis University. Students had sometimes collected in groups and gone to the cinema, leaving their teachers to address virtually empty rooms.[2] In December the Deputy Rector of Moscow University, Professor G. D. Vovchenko, cited truancy as a causal factor behind the expulsion of students from the university.[3] Complaints of extensive absences followed again in January 1957.

For the lecturers, empty seats were perhaps less of a problem than the next "deviation" with which they had to cope: according to the youth journal *Komsomolskaia Pravda* (August 9, 1956), in the aftermath of the Twentieth CPSU Congress, students began raising "awkward questions" in class concerning such issues as the "cult of personality" and, by implication, the crimes of Stalin. These questions became more insistent and decidely more "awkward" in the course of the fall's turmoil in Hungary and Poland, as will be shown. The Soviet press has intimated that lecturers so confronted have tended to run away from questioning instead of grappling with the issues involved. But such tactics have only whetted young appetites: as one student reportedly put it, "We were not allowed . . . [to speak up] until recently; soon the old restraints will be reimposed, but now we can raise these questions and so we do." [4]

Faced with lecturers' refusals to discuss "things that were not to be discussed," as one paper put it, students proceeded to set up their own discussion groups. Such groups are not in themselves a new phenomenon; what *is* new is that they have operated in the open, and there are reportedly many more of them than ever before. To express their views, students have resorted to circulating hand-written magazines, again apparently with no attempt at secrecy, although such activity is illegal without official authorization. As early as December 23, 1955, *Komsomolskaia Pravda* sharply condemned the appearance of an illegal publication called *The Fig Leaf,* produced in the Lithuanian University of Vilnius. A few days later (January 4, 1956) the same paper revealed the existence of another free-speaking magazine called the *Azure Bud* at Leningrad University. Later journals have had bolder titles: in December 1956 students of the Leningrad Railway Engineering Institute were publishing *Fresh Voices,* while students of the Librarians' Institute, also in Leningrad, brought out a journal called *Heresy* (reported in *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* respectively December 16 and 28).

[2] *Zaria Vostoka,* March 24, 1956.

[3] Cited in the *Daily Telegraph,* London, December 10, 1956.

[4] Quoted in the *Manchester Guardian,* March 7, 1957.

A more open forum for free discussion has been the wall newspaper. In some cases outspoken student views have appeared in officially authorized wall papers, such as the *Bell* and *Tribune* at Moscow University, or *Culture* in the Leningrad Technological Institute, but the medium has also been used for such illegal *ad hoc* notices as BBC news bulletins on Hungary, written down and displayed at Moscow University in the course of the uprising.[5]

Open unrest reached a high point with the emergence of large scale political meetings. Such meetings were reported mainly from Moscow during November and December 1956, although there has been evidence that they took place in other cities. Apparently most of them originated as official gatherings called by university or Komsomol authorities, but were taken over by protesting students; whatever the official subject of discussion, the argument was quickly diverted to basic issues concerning the internal and external policies of the regime.[6] The mood of the students can be gauged from the fact that they heckled and shouted down not only those among themselves who tried to deliver "proper" speeches, but also party leaders who attempted to address them: this happened in Moscow to Shepilov and even to Khrushchev.[7]

Finally, the most extreme manifestations of unrest have been public demonstrations and riots. On these information is sketchy due to the regime's almost total suppression of news reports. The first such instance of last year was a demonstration in Tiflis on March 9, 1956, during which students reportedly tore down portraits of the party leaders. In an interview with a Reuters correspondent, the Rector of Tiflis Univeristy stated that "public order" had been "disrupted" and

[5] This fact was revealed by Victor Larock, Belgian Minister for Foreign Trade, speaking at the Belgian Socialist Party Congress. He reported that bulletins had been removed by the Rector, but that students had then put up six more, after which the university was closed for one day. See the *Daily Telegraph,* November 26, 1956.

[6] See *Komsomolskaia Pravda* (December 15, 1956) and *Sovetskaia Rossia* (December 22, 1956); also *New Statesman and Nation,* London, (November 24, 1956) and the *Christian Science Monitor,* Boston, (February 23, 1957). The *Forum* letter dramatically describes a Komsomol meeting called expressly to condemn such behavior, which itself ended up as a platform for student criticism.

[7] The Khrushchev incident was cited by French Foreign Minister Pineau at a meeting of the National Council of the Socialist Party: he reported that in the course of an address by Khrushchev, students systematically applauded, making it impossible for him to say a word (Paris radio, December 15, 1956). The Shepilov incident was reported in the *Daily Mail,* London, December 20, 1956.

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that there had been casualties.[8] Later in the year student demonstrations were reported in Vilnius, Kiev, Moscow, and Stalingrad, and by early 1957 in Leningrad.[9] In the Stalingrad demonstrations students were said to have dispersed only after the police fired over the heads of the crowd. In another city students began to assemble in front of a museum, but the police, according to report, arrested some of them and dispersed the rest.[10]

The Voices of Protest

THE above-described, increasingly overt forms which unrest has taken have a drama and import in themselves, simply because they are unprecedented in Soviet experience. Much more important, however, is the substance of the protests which have been aired. What are the questions for which Soviet students have been demanding answers? What is it that they have felt compelled to say in their journals and wall-papers, their discussion groups and their protest meetings? Specifically, to what degree have these new and more virulent expressions of nonconformism been political in nature, raising a serious issue for the regime?

For many students, of course, unrest remains an apolitical, passive and sometimes even unarticulated discontent with "things" as they are. The growing problem of absenteeism at the universities, for example, is largely an apolitical phenomenon, arising in many cases out of boredom with the incessant injection of propaganda and ideology into study courses. Passive discontent also continues in forms it has long taken, generally expressing the reluctance or refusal of some young people to participate in the "group life" of party-controlled activities and pursuits imposed by the regime.[11] This attitude has found widely different and interesting outlets, among them: withdrawal into studies, a kind of academism which imitates the "internal emigrés" of the older generation; withdrawal into religious life, a phenomenon which the regime has treated with increasing concern since World War II; finally,

THE ENTHUSIAST

Above: All, as one, we shall go to the virgin lands!
Middle: All, as one, we shall go to the new settlements!
Below: One not as all.

—From *Krokodil* (Moscow), June 10, 1956.

withdrawal into a do-nothing, pleasure-seeking existence which finds its extreme expression in the much-criticized behavior of the *stilyagi and* "gilded youth" of Soviet society.

An intermediate step between purely apolitical nonconformism and political protest has been the open declaration of passive resistance to regime-prescribed "group action": "We do not want anything and we will do nothing"—such was the answer of a group of students of the Leningrad Pedagogical Institute to a

[8] Interview published in the *Scotsman,* Glasgow, April 19, 1956. According to news reports at the time and to a private source, rioting was not confined to Tiflis, but spread throughout Georgia.

[9] See variously the *Manchester Guardian* (December 8 and 12, 1956); *The Observer* (December 30, 1956); the London *Times* (January 1, 1957); and the *Christian Science Monitor* (February 23, 1957). The reports on Kiev, Moscow and Stalingrad (in *The Observer* and *The Times*) must be treated with circumspection, as it has proved impossible to authenticate details or check sources.

[10] *Manchester Guardian,* March 7, 1957.

[11] See *Izvestia,* December 2, 1956.

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proposal that they take part in the forthcoming Festival of World Youth.[12]

The increasing political coloration of student protest emerges in the gamut of nonconformist ideas voiced in the discussion groups, journals and other media described above. Though details on the precise statement of such ideas are scanty, available information shows that they have cut across a wide variety of issues, touching on Soviet culture, ideology, education, philosophy, *etc.*, and finally erupting—in the aftermath of Hungary and Poland—in direct criticisms of regime policies and of the Soviet political and social system.

A clue to some of the ideas expressed is afforded by criticisms in the Soviet press. The first official complaints dealt mostly with cultural issues. Repeatedly, the charge has been leveled that "nihilists" and "demagogues" were rejecting official Communist claims of cultural achievement and the validity of the principles of "socialist realism" in literary and artistic work, at the same time producing "ultrarevolutionary statements intended to impress the imagination of the audience by their boldness and to elicit applause." [13] Such ideas have been branded as "unhealthy", "alien" and "harmful". Far worse, according to recent complaints, students are now using "pseudo-revolutionary phraseology" to "strive to sow mistrust toward everything that exists," [14] to "propagate various fictions about our life . . . and to blacken the achievements of the Soviet people." [15]

Among the views spread by "nihilists" and "demagogues", many have dealt with ideological restrictions on education. Dissatisfaction has been expressed over the propaganda content of textbooks and "the unsatisfactory level of lectures," particularly those on Marxism-Leninism, dialectical materialism and political economy.[16] Such dissatisfaction has led to open discussions of ideological problems, reportedly resulting in the emergence of distinct trends bordering on heresy. For example, at the Philosophical Faculty of Moscow University, there appeared among students a so-called "epistemological trend" which apparently "advocates an idealistic interpretation of Marxist-Leninist philosophy and denies that dialectical materialism is a concept and historical materialism a philosophical science." In this case there was reported connivance on the part of the teachers, some of whom also regard philosophy as limited to epistemology and logic.[17]

Another whole category of student complaints can be classified as demands for greater individual freedom, both of mind and of movement. As early as 1955 a law student at Moscow University by the name of Ivanenko openly argued in favor of the individual's right to freedom of taste in his social behavior. Demanding rule by the written law, he called for freedom of actions not expressly forbidden by law, specifically defending the right of the *stilyagi* to behave as they like.[18] Arguments for greater cultural freedom have been widespread, as indicated above. In Leningrad, for instance, students recently demanded "freedom of creative discussion" and of "bold thought," and complained at the same time that the "creative initiative" of student organizations was being suppressed.[19] According to *Molodoi Kommunist* (No. 1, 1957), "demagogues" have even voiced their approval of the "freedom of the individual" in the capitalist countries.

A closely allied category of complaints has been widespread protest over regime censorship and a demand for undoctored information, in particular for straight news about topical events. This demand reached a high point of urgency during the autumn events in Hungary and Poland, when students raised some of the most defiant of the "awkward questions" which the regime has deplored. At a lecture on international affairs held in the Lenin Library in Moscow, for example, students submitted a large number of written queries on the East European situation, expressing doubts about the truth of reports in the Soviet press.[20] At Moscow University, notice boards were used not only for BBC news bulletins on Hungary but also—according to the labor journal *Trud* (January 8, 1957)—for "crude and slanderous attacks on the Soviet press, copied from bourgeois newspapers". Meetings were also held at which Polish and Hungarian students studying in Moscow were pressed for information concerning the real state of affairs in their countries.[21]

The same desire for information is reflected in the marked change of student attitudes and conduct toward foreigners in the USSR. A number of visitors have reported that young people have been eager with questions, not only about life abroad but about vital political issues, and have been willing to discuss the latter with a frankness anheard of in the past.[22] Several foreigners

[12] *Leningradskaia Pravda,* December 11, 1956.

[13] See *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* December 23, 1955, and December 4 and 16, 1956.

[14] *Ibid.,* December 15, 1956.

[15] *Molodoi Kommunist,* No. 1, January 1957.

[16] Cf. *Zaria Vostoka,* March 24, 1956.

[17] A. I. Lutchenko, *Soviet News,* October 20, 1956.

[18] *Sovetskaia Kultura,* March 24, 1955.

[19] *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* December 4, 1956, and *Trud,* January 8, 1957.

[20] Reported in *The Observer,* December 9, 1956.

[21] *New Statesman,* November 24, 1956.

[22] To name a few, William C. Just, (*Observer,* London, September-October 1956); Dick Starkey, (*New York Herald Tribune,* December 29, 1956); Helene Peltier, (*Esprit,* Paris No. 245, December 1956).

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were even invited to attend student discussion meetings. To these visitors students have also expressed their resentment over regime restrictions on travel abroad and censorship of foreign mail.[23]

The most astonishing and, from the regime's point of view, most dangerous category of student protest has been a recent rash of criticism aimed directly at the regime, in some cases challenging the basic foundations of the Soviet political and social system. One report states that members of a literary discussion group in Moscow were arrested after "discussions of the repressive policies of Stalin and Zhdanov led . . . to discussions of the government and to criticism of the present leadership for delaying genuine democratization." [24] Another report of a stormy meeting at Moscow University says students started out by criticizing the "bureaucratic degeneration" of the Soviet system, then "stressed the need for more effective public control over government bodies and insisted that this control should develop from below; deplored official excuses such as the 'dangers of infection by bourgeois ideology' which were used to suppress criticism and withhold information; and called for greater efforts to apply Marxism-Leninism creatively to the country's political needs." [25] A manifesto displayed afterwards on the notice boards demanded the replacement of the Supreme Soviet by a genuinely democratic body based on free elections.[26] The *Forum* letter, heretofore cited, describes in detail a meeting of young writers and students in the House of Literature at which the class character of Soviet society was discussed. The majority opinion was that two classes existed—the exploiters and the exploited—the former managing the party and government policy to their own benefit, and suppressing the latter through a system of "class justice". In subsequent discussions the slogan of a "socialist revolution against the pseudo-socialist state" emerged.[27] Finally, from a Soviet source—*Molodoi Kommunist* (No. 1, 1957)—comes another damaging revelation that some students believe in "popular capitalism," even while some adhere to "social democracy".

A last and specialized category of protests comes from non-Russian students, both in Moscow and in their own republics, expressing nationalist and separatist sentiments. The Tiflis riots were largely nationalist in origin and impetus, as were the reported demonstrations in Vilnius and Kiev. It appears, however, that such sentiments have met opposition both from federalist elements among the minorities and from Russian students, whatever their other views. In student discussions in Moscow, for example, Great Russians are said to have expressed themselves against splitting up the Soviet Union into component national polities with the argument that union-wide economic potential would be destroyed; in their view "the national state today must be considered a thing of the past." [28]

It remains to be said that the above sources of unrest, in one form or another, have affected all types of higher educational establishments — universities, technological institutes, and even musical conservatories—in virtually all areas of the USSR. Apart from the cities already mentioned, more or less detailed information is available on student activity in Kharkov, Baku, Riga, Minsk, Yerevan, Kishinev, Novosibirsk and Tashkent, Alma-Ata, Chimkent and Semipalatinsk.[29]

Unrest among Other Youth Groups

BEFORE examining the implications of the above array of protests, it would be well to see how the unrest they reflect affects other elements of the youth population. There are two groups of young people whose outlook is similar to that of the university students: the older pupils in secondary schools and the young professional people, the students of yesterday. Nonconformism in the secondary school population takes much the same form as it does among older students. Here, too, there is apolitical discontent which expresses itself in preoccupation with school work, in religious interest, and in imitation of the *stilyagi*. [30] Here too, the gradual politicalization of discontent has been reflected in student demands for more information, "awkward" questions and anti-Soviet utterances.[31] Like their elder brothers, teenagers have reacted against the regimentation of the official youth organizations by setting up groups of their own for various activities. One such group in Kokand, formed in 1955 as a kind of youth welfare agency to help people in trouble, roused severe criticism from the authorities, who treated it as a full-blooded "secret society".[32] In Lithuania there has been a reported move

[23] Peltier and Starkey, *loc. cit.*
[24] Reported in the *Manchester Guardian*, December 8, 1956.
[25] *Ibid.*, January 30, 1957.
[26] Reported in *The Observer*, December 9, 1956.
[27] *Forum* letter.
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] Respectively in *Komsomolskaia Pravda* (December 22, 1956); *Partiinaia Zhizn* (No. 22, December 1956); *Sovetskaia Latviia* (January 24, 1957); *Kommunist Belorussii* (No. 12, December 1956); Armenian party paper *Kommunist* (January 24, 1957); *Sovetskaia Moldavia* (December 20, 1956); *Forum* letter; *Kommunist Kazakhstan* (No. 3, March 1957).
[30] See, for instance, *Uchitelskaia Gazeta*, May 19 and December 29, 1956.
[31] See *Sovetskaia Pedagogika* (No. 3, March 1957); *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, August 29, 1956).
[32] *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, January 12, 1956.

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among school children to revive the traditions and even the formal attributes of the Scout movement.

Among young professional people, those who have the best opportunity to express themselves and to influence public opinion are, of course, the writers. Nonconformism in this group is a whole subject in itself, for the availability of young writers' works permits analysis on a different and far more sensitive level than is possible with other manifestations of unrest. In this paper it is enough to point out that the young writers have been in the forefront of the literary protestants who have demanded new themes, the exposure of propaganda fictions and an end to the rigid confinements of "socialist realism" and party tutelage. One need only mention the names of Pomerantsev, who wrote the programmatic article "On Sincerity in Literature" published in *Novyi Mir* in December 1953; of Mark Shcheglov, who revived genuine literary criticism before his death last year at the age of 30; of Dudintsev, whose *Not by Bread Alone* has already become a classic of critical realism, the first novel to expose without camouflage the Soviet social and political system.

Much less is known about the working youth, but what information is available shows that their behavior is not very different from that of the student groups. With minor variations they seek the same apolitical outlets for discontent. They, too, have their share of "nihilists" and "demagogues"—"dreamers" who, accord-

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A Marxist Dilemma

The following passage is excerpted from an English translation of "A Letter From a Moscow Student," published in the Austrian journal *Forum* (No. 38, February 1957) and referred to in the first page of the article above:

For us Russian students November 30, 1956, is a memorable day, some say a historic day. After the compulsory lecture on Marxism-Leninism by Professor B. E. Syroyechkovich the usual discussion took place, in the course of which a student . . . asked a question of decisive importance, perhaps the fateful question of our Marxism. He first expounded the irreproachable Leninist tenet that the general strike is the weapon of the proletariat, and that under certain historic conditions the general economic strike can come to a political climax and finally erupt into armed rebellion. After he had referred to this thesis of Lenin's and had added that the general strike could never be a weapon of the exploiting class, he asked how it was possible that a general strike could develop in a socialist state, specifically in the Hungarian People's Democracy, since after all there could be no such thing as a general strike against a Communist workers' and peasants' government.

In reply to this question Professor Syroyechkovich could only cite what was in our daily press. That was too little for a discussion in a university. He began to speak of the terror of Horthy-fascist officers and of the diversionist activity of Western imperialists, but his words were drowned in the noise of protests from the students, who proved to him by a flood of quotations from Lenin that he had not gone into the real question . . . In conclusion Lenin's classic statement was cited regarding the function of the "new-type party," whose duty it is to espouse the demands proclaimed by workers in the general strike and to give them direction. However, the new-type party should never proceed against a general strike with the methods of the bourgeois exploiter state, with summary courts-martial, armed suppression and forced dissolution of workers' councils. At this point the discussion deteriorated into a noisy hubbub and the professor found it better to leave.

The incident became quickly known in the students' quarters behind the university. The discussions continued, and even late that night Hungarian guest students were gotten out of their beds to report about the conditions in their homeland.

The Hungarians were evidently not used to such open discussions, and as a result of the political changes which had in the meantime taken place in their homeland, they avoided all embarrassing questions. Nevertheless, what they reported provided material enough for comparisons with the conditions in the Soviet Union . . . Gradually a question crystallized that is of the utmost significance for a socialist system: although the party bureaucracy does not possess any formal title to society's means of production, has it not, through its practical control over these means of production, through their utilization, through the distribution of manpower and through the control which it exercises over wages, already become an exploiting class in the original Marxist sense? And may it not then also become permissible or even necessary to oppose it [the party bureaucracy] by means of the Marxist weapon in the class struggle, the general strike? . . . .

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ing to the Soviet leader Voroshilov, "are seeking something and dreaming about something, but . . . not anything they should be dreaming about," who are "bugs and beetles" and "should not exist".[33] Specific forms of disaffection and unrest among working youth include reluctance to take up manual jobs on the part of those who had hoped to go on to higher education; desertion from the "virgin lands" and construction projects in the East and North of the USSR; widespread manifestations of escapism in the form of drunkenness and hooliganism; and finally, participation in reported protest actions at workers' meetings and in strikes.

The existence of unrest among soldiers of the Soviet Army—the majority of whom are young conscripts—was dramatically underscored last year by the behavior of Soviet troops during the Hungarian revolution. The conduct of those who reacted against orders ranged from unwillingness to fight and fraternization with Hungarians, to refusal to fire upon civilians, surrender, and even defection to the revolutionaries' side.[34] The degree of disaffection among these soldiers can be gauged from the different lines of conduct they chose to take; some apparently disliked acting as oppressors of a clearly national and working-class movement, while others showed open and active opposition to the Soviet regime as such.

The Survival of Individuality

IF one were to seek a single word to characterize the phenomenon of unrest among Soviet youth, that word would have to be "diversity": as the above discussion has shown, the sources of discontent are as diverse as the forms of expression it has taken and the views it has produced. Yet in this very diversity lies the clue to perhaps the most important single observation which can be made—namely, that Soviet totalitarianism has manifestly failed to crush out individuality and to impose a rigid pattern of conformist thought on its youth.

To be sure, the post-Stalin regime has itself been a catalyst in the eruption of youth unrest. By abandoning the excesses of Stalinist terrorism, it created a climate in which discontent was bolder to express itself. By calling for eradication of the effects of the "cult of personality," it opened the door to a far broader sweep of reformist opinion than it had bargained for. Against this background, the dynamic developments of 1956—first, the leakage of Khrushchev's attack on Stalin, and then the turmoil in Eastern Europe—were bound to have tremendous impact, particularly among student groups.

Whether or not long-suppressed discontent would have erupted into overt political demonstrations in the absence of these developments is hard to tell. But no events could have produced such a reaction if the Soviet system had been successful in creating the species of "New Soviet Man" which has been the aim of its entire youth program—if Stalin, in short, had succeeded in producing the new generation of Orwell's nightmare state in *1984*. Man's conscience, religion and national consciousness, "illegal" public opinion fed by memory, classical literature and even contact with foreigners (through foreign broadcasts) survived under Stalin, Yezhov and Beria—and so did man's individuality, visible today in the very difference of drives, outlets and opinions manifested among the youth populace.

Where youth unrest will lead in the future is a matter of pure speculation. A hint might be found, however, in the character of the more articulate "political" views which have been aired among student elements. Of those views and discussions on which reports have been available to outsiders, the discernible sources of opinion have been the Marxist tradition in its true "Leninist" and social-democratic varieties, a minority adherence to the ideology of "popular capitalism," the nationalist aspirations of non-Russian peoples, and religious teaching and morals. The majority of views seem to fall within the first category—that is, to express a desire for reform, and even radical reform, within a socialist system. And as noted earlier, both Great Russians and federalists among the minorities have voiced fear of any steps which would weaken the Soviet nation or cause serious economic disruption. This fear works as a strong brake on revolutionary tendencies and is an additional factor favoring the reformist trend within the opposition. Beyond these observations, it is impossible to predict in which direction and to what degree further opposition might develop: it seems safe to remark, however, that the Soviet regime is courting incalculable future trouble if it finds no better answer for student unrest than its present calls for an increased dosage of "political and ideological" education, and greater "vigilance" against "demagogues."

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[33] Voroshilov's speech on the occasion of the presentation of the Lenin Order to the Komsomol, broadcast live by Moscow Radio at 2:00 pm on March 1, 1957. This passage was omitted from the text published in *Pravda* on March 2.

[34] See statement by a former member of the Hungarian Parliament in *Daily Express,* (November 10, 1956); statement on the Hungarian Free Radio, reported in *Manchester Guardian,* November 13, 1956; statement by Dr. Thomas Pasztor of the Hungarian "Revolutionary Council", *Evening News,* November 16, 1956. See also reports from Budapest in *The Observer* (November 11); *News Chronicle* (October 29); *Manchester Guardian* (November 15); *Daily Telegraph* (October 30, November 3).

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Poland at the Crossroads

EDITORS' NOTE: The two articles below offer a balance sheet of the achievements, problems, and prospects of Poland's unique experiment of limited democracy under Communist auspices—and under Soviet "supervision." Mr. Birnbaum's article traces the history of Communist Poland, first under Gomulka's leadership, then during its Stalinist era, and finally as it is emerging now, after the successful defiance of Stalin's successors. He examines the numerous difficulties faced by the present regime, and concludes that its viability depends largely on the success of its economic policy.

Mr. Milosz's article deals with one important aspect of the Polish problem, that of anti-Semitism. By no means disregarding the specific local roots of this phenomenon, Mr. Milosz makes it nevertheless clear that far from "solving" the problem of national enmities—as has been claimed by its adherents—communism has in fact exacerbated it. Although the Soviet attitude *vis-à-vis* the Jews is of a piece with its overall nationality policy, its anti-Semitism must be viewed in a special light: as a social and political disease peculiar to all reactionary and totalitarian regimes, of which the Soviet Union is the prime contemporary example. It is no surprise that the anti-Semitic faction in the Polish Communist Party can be clearly identified as constituting the extreme right of the political spectrum in Poland: for its anti-Semitism is combined with a general reactionary political program and, as such, is not merely the conscious manipulation of grass-roots sentiments for the sake of political expediency, but a very genuine manifestation of the same narrow, bigoted, authoritarian mentality which finds in Soviet communism its most congenial form of political expression.

Warsaw and the Communist Bloc

By IMMANUEL BIRNBAUM

IT was in the last year of World War II that the Soviet embassy in Stockholm, under Ambassador Alexandra Kollontay and her deputy Vladimir Semionov, began to prepare Western newspaper correspondents for Moscow's plans regarding the development of the "liberated" countries in Eastern Europe. Shortly thereafter, more details on these plans began to emanate from the Soviet embassies in London and Washington. The USSR, said the Soviet spokesmen, had no desire to establish Soviet republics in Poland, Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Quite the contrary: it was deeply and sincerely interested in seeing to it that these countries create genuine democratic systems. Of course, there could be no talk of going back to the obsolete forms of "bourgeois democracy"; what Eastern Europe needed was "people's democracies." The difference between these two systems, said the Soviets, was essentially twofold: First, the "anti-democratic" forces of large feudal landowners

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and of monopoly capitalism would have to be liquidated once and for all. Second, the Communist parties that had been suppressed or discriminated against before the war would have to be permitted to function freely, and to contribute to the creation of new political institutions, in concert with other "democratic forces." Thus, reasoned the Soviets, there would be no possibility of the emergence of a belt of hostile countries surrounding the USSR, and the peoples of Eastern Europe would be allowed to enjoy the fruits of peace and economic reconstruction.

Curiously enough, some of the Communist parties in the newly liberated territories accepted the Soviet promise of non-interference at face value. In fact, some of their leaders—such as Wladyslaw Gomulka—began to develop their own theories about "people's democracies." The "vicarious suffering" of the Russian working class, said Gomulka at that time, had made it possible for other nations to take an easier path to socialist salvation than did Lenin's country. In Poland a revolution was no longer necessary. Social and economic institutions could be developed peacefully, without resort to terror and coercion. Stanislaw Szwalbe, one of the leaders of the Polish Socialist Party which at that time cooperated with the Workers (*i.e.*, Communist) Party, amplified these theories by drafting a "three-sector plan" for the Polish economy of the future. The nationalized big industry, a broad sector of cooperative production and distribution, and finally a private sector of small industry, artisans, individual peasants and small shopkeepers, were to work side by side, in peaceful competition with one another. Whichever proved to be most viable would—in effect—develop most successfully. Szwalbe, the old advocate of cooperatives, evidently hoped that the economic communities of voluntary associations would show themselves to be superior to both individual enterprise and state bureaucracy.

Stalin soon did away with such dreams. In 1948, after the chastisement of Tito, men like Gomulka and Szwalbe were pushed aside, and Moscow issued new directives. Toleration of private business in any large degree gave capitalism a chance for a comeback, said Hilary Minc, the economic dictator of Poland. The cooperative system could be useful to socialism only if it obediently subordinated itself to the planned state economy, not if it placed itself on the same level. Russia had not fought and bled for the implementation of communism in order to open new paths to other countries, but in order to give them an example. "People's democracy" had political and economic meaning only as a transitional stage to full socialism according to the Soviet model.

URZAD PATENTOWY
rys. Tadeusz Kobak
— W związku z walką o obniżkę kosztów własnych, chciałem opatentować model uniwersalnego pomnika.

—In connection with the struggle to lower costs, I would like to get a patent for a model of a universal statue. (Sign reads "Patent Bureau".)

—From *Szpilki;* March 10, 1957.

BEGINNING in 1949, Polish policy under the leadership of Boleslaw Bierut followed the directives issued by the Kremlin. While Gomulka went to prison, Soviet Marshal Rokossovski took over the high command of the Polish armed forces. While previously Marian Spychalski, Defense Vice Minister, had at one time gone as far as to say that one could already send home with thanks most of the Soviet instructors of the new Polish troops and have some of the staff officers educated at the War College in France, such proposals were now considered criminal. At the same time, the Polish educational system fell prey to Russian influence. In the schools, Russian became a compulsory subject, and Polish book stores, theatres, and cinemas became inundated with Russian products.

It was in the economic sphere that the disastrous effects of this policy became most readily apparent. In the first postwar years Poland had earned considerable profit from trade with the West, especially from her extensive coal exports, since countries such as Great Britain had not yet gotten their fuel exports under way again. These profits, in turn, helped to finance a good part of the reconstruction of her industry. When Moscow ordered commercial exchange with the West to be restricted, Poland's economy declined, as her exports to the countries of the Soviet bloc could not provide a full substitute. The deliveries to the Soviet Union were allegedly paid for at world market prices; however,

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owing to an excessively high rate of exchange for the ruble, the actual counterdeliveries were worth much less. Polish exports to other Communist countries such as China could be considerably increased, to be sure, but only by granting long-term credits, which were very distasteful to a capital-poor country such as Poland. Trade with the Soviet zone of Germany became rather extensive, but aside from Central German potash fertilizers, Thuringian optical instruments and various Saxon machines, East Germany could not provide counterdeliveries in any great amounts.

The new agrarian policy, which threatened the Polish farmers with integration in collective farms and concentrated the state promotion of agriculture on the "socialist sector" of production, disrupted the food supplies of the quickly growing cities and industrial areas. The collectivization of trade and small business brought about disorder in the distribution of goods. In addition, state industrial production, too, was disintegrating. The system of performance wages on the Soviet pattern could not be efficacious where the workers were not in any position to meet high production goals, on account of the lack of raw materials and semi-finished products, inadequate food for their families, and a serious housing shortage. Therefore it was precisely among the workers that the dissatisfaction grew apace. This, in turn, created restlessness within the ranks of the Communist functionaries, who found it increasingly difficult to cope with their tasks, and who had their ideological armor punctured by the considerable gap between theory and practice.

The "Thaw"

WHEN the "thaw" began in Moscow, its effects immediately spread to Poland. With the fall of Beria the bloated police apparatus of the Warsaw Government could no longer rely on support from the East. When the Moscow-backed leader of the Polish CP, Bierut, died at the beginning of 1956, the party intellectuals, already emboldened by the disclosures of the Twentieth CPSU Congress, and aroused over some atrocity scandals that came into the open at that time, loudly demanded a cleanup of the security apparatus. About the same time the regime decided to empty the overcrowded prisons by means of a political amnesty. As a result of it, thousands of old opponents of the regime, who had not become reconciled through their sufferings in captivity, returned to their homes. The weakened police apparatus was no longer in a position to keep them under surveillance. The supporters of the regime felt more and more the need to break through their isolation from the people and, by a visible change of course, to make a break with the past.

The serious workers' uprising, which broke out during the international fair of 1956 in Poznan was ascribed, in a statement published by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to the sinister machinations of foreign agents. But the more sophisticated Polish Communists realized that this was arid nonsense. The investigation of the uprising revealed that it was organized by the leaders of the Communist workers' councils of a large plant, who were disappointed over their negotiations with the economic ministries. The local party functionaries felt so helpless that at the decisive moment some of them simply fled. It was only through the employment of emergency police from outside that order could, with difficulty, be restored. That would hardly have been possible, however, if Prime Minister Cyrankiewicz had not used the opportunity to promise publicly a swift change of course. His promise was immediately followed by the dismissal from office of the responsible economic ministers, thus allaying further worker discontent.

It was then that even the proved adherents of Moscow, such as the party secretaries Edward Ochab and Roman Zambrowski, realized that a change of course had become unavoidable. Accordingly, they began to negotiate with Gomulka, who had only recently regained his freedom, to persuade him to make himself available once more to the party leadership. Through his punishment and imprisonment Gomulka had become a symbol of resistance to Moscow. Whereas in the first postwar years he was popular only among the supporters of the regime, he now enjoyed sympathies far beyond the Communist ranks. When he set his conditions for his return, there were objections from the old Stalinists, who met in Natolin Castle, Bierut's former residence, south of Warsaw. But this small group of functionaries schooled in Moscow was at that time quite isolated in the country. Its sole hope was armed intervention by the USSR.

Gomulka's Victory

WHEN Gomulka was re-elected almost unanimously as Secretary-General of the United Workers' Party, some of his old followers also returned to the party leadership: the former State Secretary Zenon Kliszko, specialist in judicial matters and electoral procedures, and the labor union leader Loga-Sowinski. At the same time, those of Bierut's co-workers who clearly disapproved and tried to sabotage the new course were summarily removed from their positions.

Moscow's reaction to this turn of events has been strongly dramatized in the Western press, yet the fact is that it followed a rather hesitant course. The first overt attempt to interfere with the march of events

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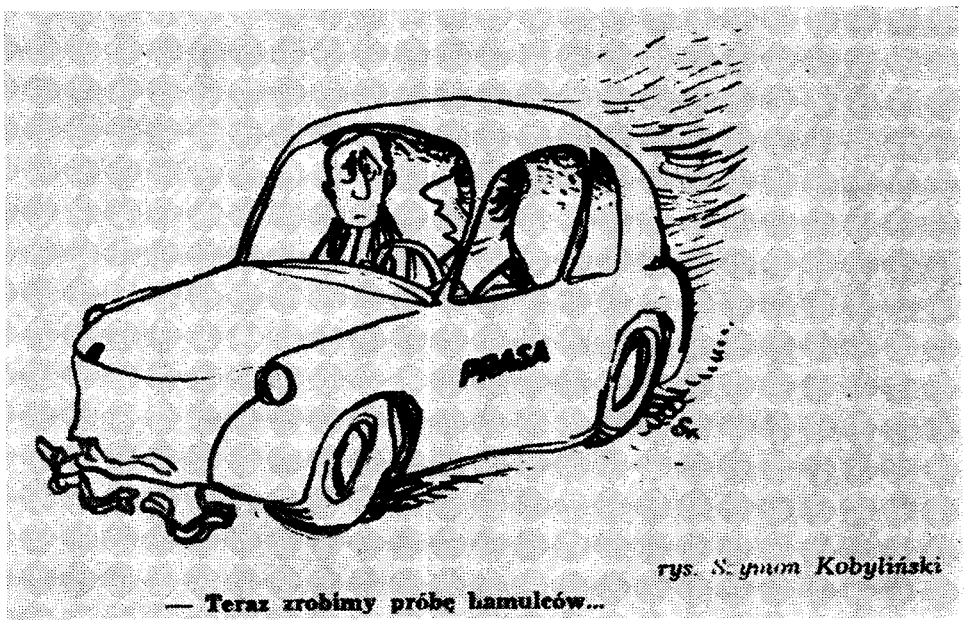
THE PRESS

—And now we'd better try out the brakes.

—From *Szpilki* (Warsaw), March 24, 1957.



— Teraz zrobimy próbę hamulców...

occurred in July 1956, when Bulganin, accompanied by Marshal Zhukov, arrived in Poland to lay down the "line" on the Poznan uprising. During the historic Eighth Plenum of the Central Committee that elected Gomulka Secretary-General, a still stronger delegation from Moscow descended on Warsaw. It was headed by Khrushchev, who demanded a reversal, called Gomulka a "traitor" and threatened the Poles with punitive measures. At the same time, Soviet troop units began to move from various parts of the country in the direction of Warsaw. However, the Poles held their own in the face of these threats. General Spychalski, who had replaced Rokossovski, sent Polish police, led by several generals who had shortly before still been in the Stalinist prisons, to meet the Soviet units. In the meantime, Gomulka politely informed the Soviet "guests" that he could negotiate with Khrushchev only after the Soviet troop movements had been halted. After a brief and heated exchange the Soviets yielded to the Polish demands.

Shortly after these events, Gomulka, Cyrankiewicz, and several other leaders of the Polish CP arrived in Moscow to work out a new basis for relations between Poland and the USSR. Their negotiations yielded an agreement limiting the number, location and movements of Soviet troops within the borders of Poland. According to its terms, the cost of supporting these troops would in the future be borne by the Moscow government alone. Further Soviet concessions were of an economic nature. The Polish debts, in the nominal amount of about two billion rubles, run up by earlier Soviet credits, were canceled outright. Poland received at the same time a new advance on goods in the amount of about a third of this sum. With these concessions Moscow was able for the time being to get around another Polish demand, namely, the alteration of the present rate of exchange between the zloty and the ruble. On the other hand the Poles were tacitly left free to accept economic aid from the West as well. That was the political basis for the negotiations that would be started shortly thereafter between Warsaw and Washington concerning American economic aid.

The political concessions which Cyrankiewicz and Gomulka for their part made to the Soviets were especially valuable for Moscow at the moment when in Hungary the Nagy government had brought Soviet prestige into jeopardy by its attempt to detach the country from the Soviet bloc. The Poles, in contrast, stated that they agreed in principle to the Soviet troops remaining in their territory. They justified this on the grounds of the continuation of the German demand for alteration of the provisional Oder-Neisse boundary, in conjunction with the increasing West German rearmament. In this situation, they asserted, the presence of Soviet forces west of the Oder continued to be necessary, as was the maintenance of liaison troops on Polish territory. This explanation was rewarded by the Soviet government by another confirmation of its guarantee of the Oder-Neisse boundary. Certainly Bulganin and Khrushchev did not agree to such a gesture because Gomulka's Poland was just as agreeable to them as the Poland of Bierut. However, such a boundary guarantee helps to keep Warsaw tied to the Soviet bloc. Every Western negotiator with Poland is thereby

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outbid in the boundary question from the very start. The weakness of this Moscow policy and a Polish stand that leans on it lies in the one point that only a unilaterally supported power position at the Oder is thereby created. An agreement with Germany on the boundary question, on the other hand, could give the Poles an uncontested legal position *vis-à-vis* their Western neighbor.

Polish acquiescence at the Soviet "line" regarding Hungary and the Middle East, while seemingly a victory for the USSR, is actually of negligible significance. These statements did not go beyond what neutral governments such as those of India or Sweden have said regarding the Suez question or regarding the admission of Peiping to the United Nations. Furthermore, Warsaw is not siding with Peiping only as a favor to Moscow. It also wishes to remain directly in close contact with this second great power of the Communist bloc, as a possible protector of its independence *vis-à-vis* the USSR. This was evident during the visit of Chou En-lai to Warsaw at the beginning of this year, which began with public Chinese exhortations to Poland to maintain the unity of the socialist camp and ended with an equally public recognition of Gomulka's stand by the Chinese guest. Soon thereafter, at the beginning of April, Cyrankiewicz went to Peiping for a return visit, thus underscoring the further development of Polish-Chinese ties within the Communist bloc.

In regard to Hungary, the Poles acted very elastically. They let themselves be committed by Moscow to a statement of sympathy for the Kadar Government, but not to an express approval of Soviet armed intervention. In a vote on this question in the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Polish representative for the first time in many years dissociated himself from the stand of the Soviet Union by abstaining from voting.

Conflicts and Pitfalls

AT the end of 1956 Soviet policy was willing to accept this Polish attitude. At that time it was still having serious difficulties with Hungary, and it was enmeshed in new trouble with Yugoslavia, whose insistence on the thesis of "different paths to socialism" was whittling away the monolithic ideological unity of the Communist bloc. Furthermore, it was probably under the pressure of China to treat the European allies carefully lest it lose prestige among the Asiatic peoples. In return, Chou En-lai embarked on his trip through Eastern Europe for the purpose of cementing the Communist bloc and upholding the "leading role" of the USSR.

Shortly thereafter, however, Moscow's power position in Eastern Europe improved. In Hungary Kadar's regime was strengthened and steps were taken to forestall another uprising. The Yugoslavs were isolated anew by a clear shift of the neighboring Communist governments away from Tito. In Poland the Soviet counteroffensive moved with considerable caution. First, it made sure that the neighboring Communist governments in East Berlin and Prague take a stand clearly at variance with Gomulka's. Then internal counterforces were mobilized. Since the old Stalinist functionaries around Berman, Nowak and Mazur had become thoroughly discredited, they were not brought into the party leadership again. Nevertheless, Gomulka's attempt at deflating the governmental apparatus by the dismissal of thousands of police officials and other government functionaries, created the very discontent within the party apparatus that pro-Soviet functionaries could utilize for the advancement of their own aims. This discontent finally became so alarming that Cyrankiewicz was forced to reorganize his government after the new election of Parliament in February so as to include one of the leading Stalinists, the former party secretary Zenon Nowak, in the post of deputy prime minister.

One should not overlook the fact, however, that in this reorganization concessions were made not only to the right but also to the left. Thus, a strong man from the ranks of the Peasant Party, its present chairman, Stefan Ignar, has also been appointed deputy prime minister. A political leader who has consistently maintained the most independent attitude toward the Communists, Ignar has been insisting that his party be treated on an equal level with the United Workers' Party, which he occasionally criticizes publicly. As an influential man in the peasants' self-help cooperatives he can afford a certain measure of independence, since at present it would be hard to get along without his cooperation in economic questions. The appointment to the Foreign Trade Ministry of the liberal expert Witold Trompczynski, a pupil of the Harvard political economists, was also a concession to the forces which demanded an undoctrinaire treatment of trade and payments relations with foreign countries. The re-emergence of Oskar Lange, who during the war taught at an American university, as adviser to the Prime Minister in economic matters lies in the same direction.

It was consistent with this trend towards greater independence and political and economic rationalism, that the new Polish cabinet took up economic policy negotiations with the West. Trade with the German Federal Republic was considerably expanded. The US was asked for advance deliveries of food and large dollar credits. In the European Economic Commission of the United Nations the Polish delegate made the proposal that Western European investments in Upper

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Silesian coal mining be utilized for the expansion of production there and that they be covered by long-term deliveries of anthracite coal to Western Germany and France. The hopes placed by Poland on close economic cooperation with the West were rather high, and it is entirely within the realm of possibility that their failure may lead to a political reversal for the Gomulka regime. The prospects for Western European investments in Upper Silesia are also, for many reasons, not very bright. One will therefore have to reckon with the possibility that the Polish government will again encounter considerable difficulties in the near future. Gomulka was already compelled to reject as unworkable any new wage increases, though he recognized them as necessary in principle. The critical months in Poland are usually those preceding the new harvest. It remains to be seen to what extent at least the food shortage may be relieved by deliveries from the West.

The Precarious Balance

IN the course of the past year Poland has attained the highest degree of independence of any Eastern European state within the Communist bloc. Polish nationalism has won its first victory against the powerful Soviet neighbor. This is the basis for Gomulka's popularity. But his popularity has also been enhanced by the fact that he has been able to win a measure of independence without involving his country in a bloody revolution à la Hungary.

One may assume that a majority of the Polish people are at present in agreement with the foreign policy of their government, whereas there is no doubt that the Communist economic policy, even in its present form, can only satisfy a small minority. It is on the further success of this economic policy that the viability of the Polish "road to socialism" will depend. Should the economic policy fail, there may very well be not only a reversion to Stalinism, but also a further spread of violent anti-Communist opposition and new outbreaks similar to the Poznan uprising.

The strength of anti-Soviet sentiments in Poland has now made it clear to the Soviet leaders that that country can hardly be utilized in the foreseeable future as an assembly area against the West. Even such a vulnerable political leader as Cyrankiewicz stated during his sojourn in India at the beginning of April that all that is necessary to create a new situation for Poland is a treaty commitment embodying the assurances already given repeatedly by leading members of the Western German Government, that the German-Polish boundary question will not be "solved" by forcible means. As soon as the fear of a German policy of force is entirely eliminated, he stated, there will also no longer be any reason for Warsaw to remain in the Warsaw Pact. Such a statement is sufficiently elastic not to expose Polish policy to new remonstrances from Moscow and to invite Bonn to inaugurate political conversations with the present Polish government.

Anti-Semitism in Poland

By CZESLAW MILOSZ

RECENTLY the world press has been full of reports about the recrudescence of one of Poland's most ancient ills — anti-Semitism. Since the Gomulka "revolution" in October 1956, the Warsaw press has been airing the problem in numerous articles warning the public against the anti-Semitic propaganda which has been sweeping the country. It requires no great sophistication to see the political significance in the simultaneous collapse of Stalinism in Poland and the resurgence of an anti-Semitic crisis. But there is no simple explanation of the conditions peculiar to Polish life which have enabled reactionary groups once again to exploit this time-tested political weapon.

First of all, it is necessary to realize that there has never been an abatement of the long heritage of anti-Semitism in the peasant mentality of Eastern Europe: it flourished to a remarkable degree in Poland during the period of Stalinist orthodoxy. What was before shrouded in silence has now merely come into the open

Mr. Milosz ranks as one of Poland's most distinguished literary figures. Now living as an exile in Paris, he is the author of a penetrating study of intellectual suppression under communism (*The Captive Mind*, Knopf, 1953) and also writes both poetry and fiction which appear principally in the Paris Polish-language review, *Kultura*. His latest book is *Seizure of Power*, Criterion Press, N.Y., 1955.

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as a result of more liberal policies which permit Polish journalists to write candidly about this and other ills of Polish life. Numerous foreign correspondents, visiting Poland, who have managed to loosen the tongues of people with whom they talked, have also had a share in calling attention to the problem. There is no doubt that in the USSR and the other countries of the Eastern bloc—where travel by foreigners is more difficult and where the local press is subject to strict censorship—the tensions produced by anti-Semitism are no less, and probably even greater, than in Poland. By drawing aside the Iron Curtain, Poland has become the first country in which the enmities between national groups, so endemic to the Communist world, may be studied.

Fruitful Soil for Foul Seed

ANTI-SEMITISM is deeply imbedded in the minds of the people throughout a large part of Eastern Europe. One has to travel back through the centuries and trace the evolving structure of East European society in order to account for the prevalence and virulence of this disease. What we find are predominantly agricultural societies which preserve a sharp distinction between the town and the village. Because the Jews were not allowed to own land or enter most of the professions, they earned their living as the merchants and craftsmen of the towns. In Western Europe the swift development of commerce and industry broke down vocational restrictions and drew the inhabitants of the countryside into the towns; in many small East European cities the Jews formed the majority of the population. Their physical separation from the surrounding rural populace was accentuated by their religion, the Yiddish language, and their unique attire. The roots of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe must be seen mainly in economic frictions between town and country and in the peasant mentality which looked upon everyone who did not belong to the rural community as "an outsider."[1]

The kindling of latent anti-Semitic feelings for political purposes had already been tested on a large scale in Eastern Europe by Tsarist officials, who in 1905 formed the infamous "black hundreds"— ultra-reactionary mobs intended to battle the liberal and socialist movement and to uphold Tsarist autocracy. Since that time this political tool has frequently been used by the Soviet regime, demonstrating a greater continuity of method than has been commented upon by foreign observers. It is worth mentioning that the Soviet Union, to carry out its delayed industrialization program, recruited its labor force, its technical and bureaucratic *cadres,* from the youth of the villages, and that the parents or grandparents of today's worker and official tilled the soil. Many of these young men carried with them the instinctive anti-Semitism of their peasant background and provided a fruitful soil for today's "people's anti-Semitism." The campaigns directed against "cosmopolitans without a country" and against "Zionists" during the Slansky trial in Czechoslovakia (November 1952), the arrest of the doctors ("murderers in white aprons") in Moscow in January 1953—all had a blatantly anti-Semitic flavor. This is not to mention the frightful episode which occurred toward the end of 1948 when 48 Soviet Yiddish language authors were arrested, some of whom were later shot.[2] Acts of this kind, inspired by the old principle of "divide and rule," by no means ended with the death of Stalin. In order to divert the masses from their own sufferings, the current Soviet rulers, even though they operate less openly than the "executioner of nations," do not hesitate to seek a scapegoat.

The Jew in Postwar Poland

NEVERTHELESS, the present resurgence of anti-Semitism in Poland seems more difficult to understand. This country was the scene of one of the

[1] A clear distinction must be made between the old pattern of the agricultural communities and the anti-Semitic political demagogy prevalent since the beginning of the 20th century, especially among city mobs.

[2] On November 20, 1952, 14 leading Czechoslovak Communists, 11 of whom were stated in the official indictment to be of "Jewish origin," were put on trial before a Prague court on charges of participating in a worldwide "Jewish-nationalist-Zionist-imperialist" conspiracy to overthrow the "People's Democracy" of Czechoslovakia. Eleven of the accused were sentenced to death on November 27 and went to the gallows on December 3. This was the culmination of an official Stalinist anti-Semitic policy which had first come out in the open in 1948. At that time, Soviet newspapers had begun attacking people with allegedly "Zionist" loyalties and using such terms as "men without a country," "homeless wanderers," "rootless cosmopolitans"—all evocative of old anti-Semitic stereotypes. In addition, Soviet Jews who had assumed Russian names were cited as malefactors, the newspapers publishing their original names in parentheses after their Russian ones. The Warsaw Yiddish newspaper *Folkshtime* disclosed only recently (in April 1956) that a number of Jewish authors arrested in the Soviet Union during this campaign, and whose fate had been unknown, had been secretly tried and then executed on August 12, 1948. This has now been confirmed by official Soviet sources. Further evidence not only of a politically inspired anti-Jewish policy, but of deep-seated anti-Semitic prejudices on the part of the leaders of the "socialist motherland," comes from a prominent Canadian Communist, who reported *(Morgnfraihait,* N.Y., Dec. 12, 1956) that a two-hour talk with Khrushchev convinced him that the latter was "infected with anti-Semitism."—Editors' Note.

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most monstrous massacres in history; here the Nazis murdered nearly all of Poland's three million Jews. Only some thirty to ninety thousand survived, most of whom emigrated to Israel after the war. One would think that there no longer existed an object for anti-Semitism to vent its fury upon. How then explain the current crisis in Poland?

It is easy to forget an important consequence, for Polish Jewry, of Poland's geographical proximity to the Soviet Union. In 1939 the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact occasioned the seizure by this neighbor of the eastern part of Poland. A considerable number of people of Jewish descent in that territory thereby escaped extermination by the Nazis; many were deported by the Soviet regime to forced labor camps in which they managed to survive, and many others voluntarily fled to the east with the retreating Red Army during the German offensive of 1941. In 1944-1945, availing themselves of their Polish citizenship, they began their exodus from the borders of the Soviet Union. Therefore, while most of the Jews who had stayed in Poland and managed to survive the Nazi occupation emigrated to Israel, others who regarded Poland as a stage in their travels were continually entering from the Soviet Union. This process is by no means finished. The repatriation agreement made between the Gomulka government and Moscow opened a locked gate, and among the repatriates (it is said that eventually a half million will return) there will be many Jews.

An interesting social stratification followed this migration movement through Poland. The Jewish craftsman, worker or merchant often emigrated because he saw a better chance for himself in Israel or in the West. On the other hand, many of the intelligentsia chose to remain in Poland not only because of their attachment to the country but because they feared losing their status abroad (in view, for example, of the low practical value of a university diploma in a land where one does not know the language). Such a decision in a totalitarian country, where no private "sectors" such as free enterprise exist, meant automatic entry into the ranks of the bureaucracy.

There was another reason why many of Poland's surviving Jews found themselves in the Communist bureaucracy. When Sikorski's Polish Army was being formed in the Soviet Union during the war, the Jews who tried to join it encountered two obstacles: exclusion by anti-Semitic Polish officers and the refusal of the Soviet authorities to permit Poles from the "incorporated" Polish eastern territories, now Soviet "citizens," to join a Polish army. The same authorities, however, did not create difficulties when another Polish army, a Communist one, was formed. The Jews joined it en masse because it was an opportunity to get out of a country in which they no longer wished to live. In the army they passed through a period of indoctrination that qualified them as members of the *apparatus*. The first *cadres* of the Polish Communist Party in 1945, it must be remembered, were composed of men in uniform, a very large proportion of them intellectuals of Jewish descent. The Russians regarded them as more reliable instruments of Soviet desires in the belief that they would be less inclined to Polish patriotism because of the discrimination to which the Polish rightists had subjected them before the war.

The above circumstances have had unfortunate consequences for today's Polish Jews. While the hatred of the masses was directed against the whole privileged group, that is, all of the top party officials, through a reversion to primitive mentality it was only such "outsiders" as the political dictator, Jakub Berman, the economic dictator, Hilary Minc, or one of the directors of the Security Police, Colonel Rozanski, who were held responsible for the general poverty and terror. In other words, the hostility of the masses focused on people who were somehow distinguished by their Jewish descent, although they were no more zealous in enforcing the orders of Moscow than thousands of higher officials of non-Jewish descent.

The Consequences of the "Thaw"

THE tottering of the regime because of the "thaw" in 1955 led certain party circles to suggest that the threat of a worker's revolt might be averted by placing the responsibility for the hopeless economic situation upon a scapegoat. But first it is necessary to understand the current disposition of political forces in Poland in order to grasp the role that anti-Semitism plays in this connection. During 1956 the following political cores could be distinguished:

Natolin: Named after a locality below Warsaw, this group, composed of high party dignitaries, arose in March 1956. All Stalinists, they maintained close contact with Khrushchev, and it was probably on his advice that they decided to "lighten the load" by throwing a sacrificial victim to the masses. During the months when this group was influential, they attempted to preserve the party's tyrannical hold on the nation by buying mass support with nationalistic slogans and a purge of the *apparatus* according to the "Aryan paragraph." These tactics are clarified in the following quotation from one of the most obedient Stalinists who jumped on the Gomulka bandwagon:

> [Natolin] planned to solve the problem of responsibility for Stalinism by the classic method of assigning scapegoats. By

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a queer coincidence they were to be, above all, people of Jewish descent. This was an opportunity to play on the continually popular anti-Semitic feeling in certain circles of our nation. This recourse was meant to strengthen the transition to the "new stage" without disturbing the basis of such a convenient (for those in power) system of directing the government. . . .

Do not think that this was an unrealistic conception. If one looks closely at Poland one will see here and there very similar ideas introduced during the last year.[3]

As is well known, the military "putsch," prepared in October 1956 by the Natolin group with the support of the Russians and aimed at seizing full control of the party, was not successful.

Pax—Association of Progressive Catholics: Under this name hides a peculiar group whose purpose was to fight the Roman Catholic Church and who were favored for many years by the protection of the Security Police. The leader of Pax, Boleslaw Piasecki, had before the war been chief of the Fascist "Falange," an organization whose program featured racism. Arrested in 1944 by the NKVD, he was freed from prison when it was realized that he was willing to be useful. In order to counter the influence of the Catholic Church the Stalinist authorities granted Pax a monopoly for the production and sale of religious material. This "largest capitalist trust east of the Elbe," as it was once described in the Warsaw press, came to possess a publishing house, two weeklies, a daily, schools, etc. Piasecki's book, *Problemy zasadnicze (Basic Problems)*, in which he tried to reconcile Stalinism with Catholicism, was placed on the Index by the Vatican. On the eve of the October 1956 crisis, Piasecki stood on the threshold of a big career, having been promised by the Natolin Stalinists a high government position for a service at which he was particularly adept: a large-scale anti-Semitic campaign intended to lay a smoke screen over the continued subservience of Poland to Moscow. On October 16, 1956, only three days before the "revolution," Piasecki published an article entitled, "Government Instinct," in which he threatened Soviet intervention in the event that Gomulka entered the government.

The Liberal Wing of the Party: This group realized that the pressure from below was too strong, that it could be "dissipated" only by careful concessions, and that the "thaw" had gone a bit too far even for their tastes. The Poznan revolt in June 1956 was impressive evidence that the country was on the eve of a revolution and that one way to avert it was to enlist the support of Gomulka, who was not stained with the crimes of the past in the people's eyes. It was only because of the events of October 19-20, 1956, that Poland escaped Hungary's unhappy fate.

During those critical times a battle raged within the Central Committee, and in it the question of anti-Semitism played a large role. The "liberals" uncompromisingly condemned anti-Semitic maneuvers and gained the support of those wavering members of the Central Committee who, some by virtue of their Jewish descent and others because of basic principles, took a hostile position toward the demands of the Natolin group. When Gomulka took over the direction of the government, Poland entered upon the road to independence. The "liberal wing," whose chief he became, is not internally uniform; within it various tendencies continue to oppose one another. Both the "left," demanding radical changes, and the "right," or "reformed Stalinists," try to convince public opinion that they are the correct interpreters of Gomulka's program.

Wsciekli (the "Mad Ones"): This group of young men represents the fourth political force on the present Polish scene. They embrace all those who, whether or not members of the party, support Gomulka but openly profess at the same time that the slogan of "a return to Lenin" means nothing to them, and that it is necessary to re-think the significance of the word "socialism" during the second half of the twentieth century. Their common characteristic is, rather than any well-defined program, an aversion to all orthodoxy coupled with moral indignation against the crimes committed by the Communists. This moral ferment arose mainly in intellectual and student circles. It brought about the Polish "thaw" and paved the way for Gomulka's return. If Djilas symbolizes radicalism in Yugoslavia, then in Poland, where there is more freedom, there are thousands of Djilases. Many new weeklies edited mainly by young intellectuals, discussion clubs now numbering more than 300, and satirical plays staged by student theatrical groups form the framework within which this movement is unfolding.

The inference may be made from many articles, and especially from shorthand notes of discussions in the clubs, that the sharp conflict between the bureaucratic caste and the "Mad Ones" is a repetition of the old conflict between the bourgeois and the philistine on the one hand, and the intellectual on the other. The adherents of Natolin look upon the "demoralizers" and the "revisionists" with hatred. It is common knowledge that one of the mainstays of the Natolin group, General Witaszewski, when he was chief of political education in the army (Gomulka removed him from that post), compiled a purge list in preparation for the "putsch." The 700 names suspected of "liberalism" were those mainly of writers and journalists. Everything

[3] J. Putrament, "A Bad Aim, Unrealistic Tactics," *Politika*, February 27-March 5, 1957.

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points to the conclusion that the anti-Semitism of the Natolin group was not only a calculated plan, but that it also arose from the instincts of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie who regard the intellectual and the Jew as equally suspect and often as synonomous terms. (Outstanding positions in Polish intellectual circles have traditionally been held by persons of Jewish descent.) This bureaucratic caste has little capacity for independent thinking, and having risen from the social depths, it is thankful to Stalinism for its good, paying positions.

Such is the main adversary of the "Mad Ones." October 1956 was their triumph, and it continues because the collapse of Stalinism, propped up only by terror, is complete. Gomulka is in their debt, but he must reckon with the strength of the bureaucratic class, especially in the provinces, and with pressures from Moscow which every day accuses the Polish "mad" intellectuals of the crime of *lèse majesté*. So far he has tolerated them. There is no doubt that they most fully represent the hopes for democratization, and through their alliance with the workers in industry they can successfully aid in uprooting racist tendencies. Their strong support of Gomulka on the issue of anti-Semitism was voiced in *Po prostu*, one of the foremost organs of the young intellectuals, in these terms:

> For centuries anti-Semitism has played the role of a lightning rod for systems which were tumbling down. Is it a coincidence that the very people upon whom the Stalinist system of government depended are the very ones among whom the anti-Semitic scandal first and most violently broke loose? From this center arose a carefully organized action designed to awaken within the consciousness of society the remnants of long-established complexes and grievances. Neither at first nor later did it have an officially promoted thesis regarding the exclusive responsibility of the Jews for the system of injustice, for the loss of sovereignty, or for the economic decline.

Some Aspects of "Socialist Morality"

IS there anti-Semitism in Poland? What a question! Of course there is. For a number of years an anti-Semitic policy has flourished in our national life—unofficially, perhaps, but systematically and consistently nevertheless. Even observers on the outside could come to the conclusion that [this policy] possessed its own carefully worked out system of strategy and tactics. Take the years 1951-52—the purging from the party apparatus of comrades of Jewish descent. The years 1954-55—the forcible ejection of comrades of Jewish descent from the army. [Again] the years 1954-55—the removal of the same "category" of citizens from the state apparatus. This entire campaign (which in unofficial conversations was clearly and without any embarrassment labeled "Aryanization") was implemented by cadres especially instructed for this purpose. In the highest party echelons these activists were told to examine the number of Jews [under their jurisdiction], to check the national and even racial origin of citizens and party comrades; they were enlightened as to the *reasons* why this policy was necessary, thus providing the process of Aryanization with an "ideological basis." . . .

It must be remembered that all this was happening during the criminal trials [Slansky, the Moscow doctors' case, *etc.*] the function of which was officially described as combatting the Trotskyite-Zionist conspiracy against socialism. Having appropriated the venomous weapon of anti-Semitism from the bourgeois-fascist arsenal, an attempt was made to plant in the public mind the conviction that every person of Jewish descent, and particularly a Communist of Jewish descent, had become a spy and a traitor. . . .

At the Seventh Plenum of the Central Committee [held in July 1956], a most curious debate developed, in which three points of view emerged: Should Poland be *Judenfrei?* Should the traditional *numerus clausus* be allowed to triumph? Or should Poland be a country of proletarian internationalism? There were also — God forbid — compromise solutions, to be expected from people who long ago lost their traditions of principled ideological struggle. This debate—a most peculiar one in a Marxist party—was reflected in the decisions of the Seventh Plenum, but in fact it has not yet been terminated. What we now see is its practical manifestation, a nationalistic policy which has quickly caused the extraordinary flowering of anti-Semitism and the spread of chauvinism in its various aspects.

As filth is the best breeding ground for cockroaches and lice, so the best breeding ground for anti-Semitism is a situation where the hopes of a nation or working class have been betrayed, and where politicians look for a scapegoat to save their faces. In order to exist and to flourish, anti-Semitism must have its sower and its breeder. The person performing this function in our society is the nationalist—a person who has become infected with the virus of anti-Semitism from the bygone capitalist era and has adapted it to a phraseology corresponding to the conditions of our time.

—*From "Contagion," by Juliusz Burgin,* Przeglad Kulturalny *(Warsaw), No. 6, 1957.*

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In spite of the assertions of the anti-Semites, the vast majority of Jews in Poland had nothing in common with the government, nor with the crimes of the preceding period. They have no less reason to hate the degenerates than does the rest of society. A large number of Jews are at present returning from camps in the East or are leaving our prisons, and a great many are among those posthumously rehabilitated.

The thesis of the collective responsibility of the Jews has permitted the political boss of "Aryan" descent to divest himself of blame. . . . On the other hand, the political boss of Jewish descent can use it as a weapon by proclaiming any attack directed against him, whether justly or otherwise, as anti-Semitic persecution. In this manner he can not only avoid responsibility, but even put on the martyr's cloak of an innocent victim of national persecution.[4]

The same article clearly states that anti-Semitic propaganda is conducted according to a plan made in Moscow, designed to discredit "Gomulkism":

It is difficult to overestimate the consequences not only for relations in our own country, but also for our good name abroad, if we were deceived by the provocations of the Stalinists who are trying to save their own skins. The conservative party and the common narrow-minded people in our country are the chief bearers of anti-Semitic slogans, and all of those abroad who looked with hostile eyes at the changes in Poland did not fail to exploit the anti-Jewish excesses in order to slander the Polish revolution in the eyes of progressive world opinion; to portray the Polish movement for freedom as a chauvinistic and reactionary movement; and to slander Poland as a dark, backward country which does not deserve independence.[5]

Future Prospects

HAVING outlined the main active forces, we must not forget that the complicated affiliations and desires of the unorganized masses can create a pressure which, as was shown in October 1956, is sometimes decisive. Long years of terror, bitterness, and extreme misery developed an intense nationalism and increased religious fanaticism. Affiliation with the Church became the symbol of opposition to the puppet government; whoever was not a Roman Catholic was considered a servant of Moscow. Paradoxically, this even applied to members of the Communist Party and the ZMP (Komsomol, now dissolved). When religious instruction was resumed in the schools several months ago (wherever parents expressed a desire for it, which means everywhere) one saw press reports of beatings and often serious injuries inflicted by students on children whose parents were atheists. These children were compelled to sign up for lectures conducted by priests. The press also carried reports of beatings of Jewish children, and of discrimination practiced by some teachers. The problem of anti-Semitism in Poland, especially in smaller towns, is critical.

The Roman Catholic hierarchy has the greatest influence on the minds of the people. It can be stated with the utmost certainty that the leaders of this hierarchy, Cardinal Wyszynski and his entourage, have no anti-Semitic leanings. It is, however, difficult to know to what degree the lower clergy, who generally share the customs and habits of their parishioners, are free from them.

Another adverse factor for Polish Jews may be the absolute necessity to carry through vast economic reforms. Above all, Gomulka must reduce the huge, costly, and often completely useless bureaucracy. As a result of the peculiar stratification of Polish Jews, among whom there are few manual workers, they will be directly affected by the drive for economy.

The situation in Poland is none too bright. It is a country which, as one Warsaw writer has said, is just learning to walk after having been forced for twelve years to stand on its head. Anti-Semitism is a sign that the people have not yet fully regained their equilibrium.

The Gomulka government has granted many of its citizens passports for travel abroad, and it has allowed emigration to Israel. For many who must choose between their Polish fatherland and the fear that they will remain hated "outsiders" in it, the decision is not easy and even contains tragic elements.

In conclusion, we must realize that, in spite of certain unique Polish circumstances, the current of hatred revealed there would be found in other countries of the Eastern bloc if the lid which prevents an interior view were lifted. Undoubtedly things would be worse in proportion to the length and severity of the terror. Hunger and fear are dubious pedagogical media for attaining the harmonious coexistence of the citizens of any country.

One of the original ideals of communism was the abolition of the inhuman racial and religious hatreds which have been a blight upon human history. Idealistic young men have been duped up to the present day by the cherished illusion that the Soviet system succeeded in fulfilling this dream. Poland and Hungary stand witness to the fact that this system has produced the opposite result. Undreamt-of suffering has driven the subjects of Soviet rule into morbid states of irrational hatred and provided the kind of breeding ground in which demagoguery has always been most successful.

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[4] J. Ambrozewicz, E. Gonczarski, J. Olszewski, "When Will the Ghost Awaken?" *Po prostu,* January 6, 1957.

[5] *Ibid.* This is not the first time that the Stalinists have resorted to this stratagem. The pogrom in Kielce on July 4, 1946, was engineered by the Security Police, a branch of the NKVD. The details were revealed by Stefan Korbonski, an active worker in the Polish People's Party, in his book *W imieniu Kremla* (In the Name of the Kremlin), Paris, Kultura, 1956, pp. 135-8.

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Communism and French Labor

Part II: The Postwar Struggle for Leadership

By MICHEL COLLINET

EDITORS' NOTE: In Part I of this study (No. 1, January-February 1957), the author traced the origins and growth of Communist influence in the French labor movement through the period from 1920 to 1939, showing that the singular receptivity of the French working class to Communist doctrine stemmed both from the revolutionary content of French syndicalism, with its mistrust of political democracy, and at the same time from the obsolescence of its individualistic philosophy in the modern age of mechanized industry. The present article concludes the study with an analysis of the factors which enabled the Communists, in postwar France, to achieve virtual labor supremacy, a position which has weakened since 1947 but which still remains strong enough to constitute a serious threat to the stability of French political democracy.

THE rise of communism to the position of the dominant force in the national labor movement of France has been one of the most striking and significant phenomena in French political life since the end of World War II. Even more than its earlier growth during the twenty-year interval between the two world wars, the further and more spectacular advance of Communist influence in the postwar period reflects the remarkably successful Communist exploitation of the spontaneous tendencies animating the modern French industrial worker—social resentment at his loss of personality and mass-behavior patterns induced by mechanized production techniques.

Besides these basic social tendencies, the war gave rise to other conditions and motivations of more immediate value to the Communists: economic hardship, popular hatred of the German occupation and of the reactionary Vichy regime, and admiration of the stubborn and successful Soviet defense against German invasion. The French Communists—who themselves had remained "benevolently neutral" toward the Germans until the moment of the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, paying for their treasonable attitude with the outlawry of the party and expulsion from the General Confederation of Labor (CGT)—now became active leaders of the underground resistance movement. Their terrorist action against the Germans, however, was less effective in winning support than the institution by the Germans themselves of forced labor service. This measure, which confronted French workers with a choice between deportation to Germany and joining the Communist-led underground forces, caused a tenfold overnight increase in Communist strength and influence.

The disorganized state of French labor also was a critical factor. The prewar CGT had been banned in 1940 by the Vichy regime, and its leadership had become divided and ineffective. Part of it had gone over to open collaboration with Vichy, or at least had formally accepted its reactionary 1941 Labor Charter for the sake of keeping the unions alive. Another part had gone underground to form the "Labor Resistance" group or had joined forces with the French Provisional Government established in Algiers.

Communist Seizure of the CGT

AIDED by the disorganized state of the old trade union leadership, the Communists lost no time in moving to regain their position in the underground CGT. In April 1943, their overtures to the Jouhaux faction culminated in the conclusion of an accord at Perreux-sur-Marne, which not only readmitted the Communists to the confederal leadership but gave them

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three out of eight seats on the governing board, one more than they had obtained in the 1936 unification of the CGT and CGTU. Moreover, the five non-Communist members included Louis Saillant, who after 1945 was recognized as an active agent of the party.

The reestablishment of a unified underground CGT made possible Communist moves to organize extralegal union organs alongside those legally functioning under the Nazi occupation. This application of the Leninist principle of dual organization during revolutionary periods was designed to pave the way for the swift take-over of authority by the underground organs, either peacefully or by force, when the Germans were defeated.

The final liberation of French soil in 1944 set in motion the execution of the Communist plan. Communist armed resistance groups occupied all trade union offices and, on the pretext of eliminating those who had collaborated with the Germans, either assassinated or expelled those union officials who stood in the way of Communist seizure of control. This illegal action was then given official sanction by the Algiers Provisional Government in a decree of July 27, 1944, which formally reversed the September 1939 expulsion of the Communists from the CGT and provided for the establishment of "purge" committees to cleanse the trade union administrations of collaborationists.

The committees were authorized to remove from the reestablished directing organs of the trade unions any active member who, though "not sentenced by court action," was found guilty of "unpatriotic" behavior during the German occupation. The committees' decisions were supposedly only "provisional," to be submitted as soon as practicable to the general assemblies of the unions for ratification.

In fact, the committees, dominated by the Communists, proceeded to exceed their authority under the decree and to bar from union affiliation all persons whom they disliked or wished to eliminate, even when their conduct during the occupation had been above reproach. Moreover, the proviso making the committee rulings subject to later approval by the union general assemblies was set aside in February 1946 by the Communist Minister of Labor, Ambroise Croizat, who decreed that the rulings were legally binding even in cases where the union assemblies had rejected them by majority votes.

So effective was the Communist technique of combining illegal action against opposition elements in the unions with collusion at the government level to validate this action that, by September 1945, Communist control was an accomplished fact at virtually every echelon of the CGT organization. On the central governing board itself, the Communists now held a majority, and they also controlled the directing organs of 21 out of the 30 national federations. Most of the Communist-led federations were in the manufacturing industries, but they also embraced the miners, railway workers, general transport workers, state employees, communications and food industry workers. Communist control over the unions in state-operated enterprises—public utilities, the Renault works, etc.—was even more complete, thanks to the collaboration of the Communist ministers in the government, who facilitated the placement of party activists in key positions both in the union administrations and in governmental and semi-governmental agencies.

Labor Totalitarianism

ONCE firmly entrenched in control, the Communists proceeded to reorganize and run the CGT according to strictly totalitarian principles. Even though a majority of the rank-and-file membership of CGT unions was non-Communist, the centralization of directing authority in Communist hands at all key levels effectively stifled opposition from below. At the April 1946 confederal congress, non-Communist spokesmen were virtually denied the opportunity to express their views, and the entire proceedings became little more than a well-managed stage show designed to prove "unanimous" support of the Communist leadership.

Parallel with the stamping out of autonomy within the confederal structure, the CGT, during the period of Communist participation in the government, functioned virtually as an auxiliary arm of the regime rather than as an agency representing and defending the interests of labor. When soaring prices led to the outbreak of protest strikes in 1946 and early 1947, the CGT leadership, instead of siding with the workers, denounced the strikes as the work of "minority" trade union elements whom it accused of "playing the game of the monopolies."

As a result of these policies, dissatisfaction rapidly mounted in the ranks of the CGT unions. Groups of workers opposed to Communist control began splitting away from the CGT organizations in steadily increasing numbers, notably in the railway, communications and metal-working industries. These autonomous splinter groups, however, found themselves the target not only of stubborn and sometimes violent retaliation by the Communist-run unions but also of thinly-veiled official pressure applied through the Communist-controlled government ministries. A convenient weapon for applying pressure was available in a 1945 regulation requiring government recognition of the "representative" status of any union before it could be represented on various

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official economic agencies or put up candidates for election as factory committeemen or workers' delegates. By blocking such recognition of the rebellious unions, the Communists were able to deprive them, in effect, of all means of legal action.

In the midst of these incipient stirrings of labor revolt, the entire situation was fundamentally altered by the mid-1947 advent of the "cold war" and the shift in the international Communist line from collaboration to all-out hostility and revolutionary agitation against "bourgeois democratic" governments. In France, the Communist ministers left the government, and the CGT promptly switched over to tactics of the most extreme political opposition. The new policy of fomenting strikes for political purposes, however, only served to intensify the dissatisfaction of the non-Communist elements still remaining in the CGT. The internal crisis came to a head immediately following the abortive general strike movement of November 1947, which the Communist fraction in the CGT leadership, acting independently as a "National Strike Committee," had launched in an effort to pave the way for a Communist seizure of political power. The non-Communist leaders now seceded from the CGT and joined the already defected splinter unions in forming a rival confederation, the CGT-Force Ouvrière.

The new scission differed from the split of 1921 in an extremely significant respect. Whereas, in 1921, it had been the Communists and their Anarchist allies who split off from the CGT to form the rival CGTU, it was now the non-Communists who were forced to secede from the organization they had controlled up till 1945, and who faced the task of building a new trade union structure to compete with the Communist-run CGT. Thus, the Communists, despite their lapses into fruitless political agitation, have been the beneficiaries of the inherent conservatism of the French workers, who for the most part tend either to be apathetic toward all unions or to accept the leadership of the oldest established organization, the CGT.

With the secession of the non-Communists from its ranks, the CGT quickly shed its mask of pretended independence and became openly subservient to Communist policies and objectives. The outbreak of the Korean war was the signal for a sharp intensification of CGT-instigated strike activity, the political motivation of which the leadership no longer even tried to disguise behind a facade of economic slogans. In May 1952 these agitations culminated in an attempted general strike ordered by the CGT as a protest against the arrival of General Ridgway, the newly-designated commander of NATO. The government struck back by arresting Communist Party Secretary-General Jacques Duclos, and the CGT promptly called a new protest strike. Both attempts, however, proved resounding fiascos, for the walkout orders were not even obeyed by all Communist militants in the CGT, let alone by the entire membership which, in turn, represented less than one-tenth of the total labor force.

The "New Course" of the CGT

THE obvious failure of extremist tactics, coupled with reduced pressures from Moscow for aggressive political action following the death of Stalin, led the CGT in 1953 to shift to more realistic methods. Political slogans, while still put forward, were more subtly woven in with demands for wage increases and better working conditions. At the same time, the relative ineffectiveness of the supporting role played by the CGT in the public services and railway strikes of August 1953, initiated and largely sustained by the action of the non-Communist CGT-Force Ouvrière and Christian Workers' Confederation (CFTC), drove home to the French Communist leadership the hard lesson that no strike action launched or conducted by the CGT without the help of its rivals could be expected to achieve effective results. Whether this realization prompted the change, or whether the stimulus was a modified directive from Moscow, there was a significant revision, in 1953, of the French Communists' "unity of action" tactics vis-à-vis the free labor confederations.

Since 1945 these tactics had consistently followed the pattern of the "united front from below," previously in evidence throughout most of the 14-year split (1922-36) between the CGT and the Communist CGTU. There were two essential elements in this kind of action, the first of which was the technique of utilizing "non-organized" or "non-party" persons subservient to the Communists. The Seventh Congress of the French CP defined this method of promoting united action in the following terms:

> **One of our aims within the trade union movement must be to develop an active non-party following which will constantly expand the capacity for action and the influence of our party among the masses.[1]**

The usefulness of such "non-organized" party sympathizers lay in the fact that they could be pushed into the foreground in order to persuade the free unions that a "spontaneous" trend in public opinion required the adoption of a certain course of action desired by the Communists. Having inspired these non-party spokesmen to take the initiative, the Communists—sometimes after a false show of reluctance designed

[1] *Les communistes et les syndicats*, official brochure published by the French CP, Paris, 1932.

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to bolster the impression of spontaneity—would rally, in the end, to the support of the "non-organized" workers' proposals. This method, which conveniently absolves the party of responsibility, was typically applied by the Communists in promoting the French railway strikes of March 1951.

The second essential element in the tactics of the "united front from below" was the utilization of "dissenters" in the ranks of the CGT-Force Ouvrière and CFTC unions. In reality they were nothing but undercover party agents, or so-called "submarines", who infiltrated the free unions to serve Communist purposes. Their primary functions were to drum up opposition to the union leaders whenever possible and, in particular, to seize every opportunity to advocate "unity of action" with the Communists and the CGT. Their activity was supplemented by the formation of committees operating outside of both the CGT and the free labor confederations, and grouping together Communists, "submarines" and such "non-party" supporters as may have been successfully recruited from the ranks of the free unions. Actually the committees were but a sham "united front", for their methods and slogans concided with those of the party and the CGT, and in the last analysis they united only Communists and fellow-travelers.

Regardless of the particular methods employed, the essential characteristic of the tactics of the "united front from below" as applied in the labor field was that they were invariably aimed at the free union leaders as the principal enemy, and had as their ultimate objective the destruction of the influence of the free unions. If their application occasionally secured benefits for the wage-earners, such gains were merely incidental by-products.

Reunification Efforts

IN France these tactics had always resulted in such conspicuous setbacks for the party that their persistent employment by the French Communists until 1953 obviously was not the result of an intelligent appraisal of the situation, but rather of blind subservience to Stalinist directives. By the same token, the shift in 1953 to the tactics of the "united front from above," like the similar shift in 1934 which led to the reunification of the CGT and CGTU, was certainly not attributable solely to a French Communist reappraisal, but was influenced more by the change in the Moscow party line dictated by the requirements of Soviet foreign policy.

The CGT now began making direct unification overtures to the leaders of the free labor organizations, first trying its luck with the Christian unions, where an active minority centering around the "Reconstruction" group held positions close to those of the Communists in international policy matters. For the time being the CGT continued to shun the CGT-Force Ouvrière as a pro-American action group, but after 1954 it also began overtures in that direction, bolstering them with constant reminders that the two organizations both sprang from the same origins in the old CGT of 1895.

During the past two years in particular, the CGT leadership has left no stone unturned in its efforts to coordinate action with the free labor confederations and to win the agreement of their leaders to complete structural unification. At the same time, it has continued its attempts to inject political objectives into strike movements, concentrating on two main slogans—a cease-fire in Algeria and formation of a new Popular Front embracing the Communists.

In pressing for unification, however, the CGT finds itself subject to various handicaps. For one thing, the "united front from above" approach, of itself, limits the capability of the Communists to resort to the time-honored method of underground party fractions in the free unions. More important, the party's constant and strict surveillance over the confederal leadership has allowed it virtually no freedom of maneuver.[2] To cite a very striking example, the Thirtieth CGT Congress in May 1955 was obliged, under party pressure, to subscribe to Stalin's thesis of "the absolute pauperization of the masses" (already officially endorsed by the party Central Committee in January) over the strenuous objections of a "progressivist" group which argued that the self-evident interests of the CGT demanded replacement of the barren Stalinist position by a constructive, coherent and complete economic program.[3] It is interesting to note that, despite the subsequent rejection of the Stalinist thesis by Mikoyan at the Twentieth CPSU Congress, neither the French CP or the CGT has yet officially abandoned it.

There are indications, however, that this stubborn refusal to accept even the principle of a constructive labor program is proving increasingly embarrassing to the CGT leadership in its maneuvers for labor reuni-

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[2] Léon Mauvais, member of the French CP Politburo and head of the party's control section, is concurrently a secretary of the CGT and the principal party agent entrusted with surveillance over the official CGT leadership headed by Secretary General Benoit Frachon.

[3] Pierre Lebrun, a secretary of the CGT, headed the "progressivist" opposition at the Thirtieth Congress and had the support of the federations of printing workers, state employees, and maritime workers, and of some textile unions.

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fication and, more broadly, for a "popular front." The reason for this is that, as long as they reject such a program, the Communists weaken the credibility of their own assurances to their prospective "popular front" partners that, once in power, a popular front" regime would continue to govern by democratic processes. Thus, as much as they would like to reject out of hand the "progressivist" demands, the Communists can do so only at the risk of giving away the fact that their real intent is to use a "popular front" as a lever for destroying democracy and wresting France away from the Western alliance.

Under these circumstances, the CGT finds itself impelled by tactical considerations to tolerate, and perhaps even discreetly encourage, the "progressivist" minority with a view to using it as a bait to lure the free unions and some of the center political groups. Consequently, despite the relative unresponsiveness of the French CP leadership to destalinization, the party and the CGT may yet swing over to the "minority" position which they rejected in 1955. The party's stand in recent parliamentary debates certainly suggests that it will let neither principles nor established practices stand in the way of the prosecution of its "popular front" strategy.

The Sinews of Communist Strength

MEANWHILE, despite the challenge of the free trade union organizations, the Communists have managed to cling with remarkable tenacity to their preponderant influence in the French labor movement. One of the most important sources of their strength has resided in the effectiveness of the party apparatus with its two-pronged pincers operating simultaneously in the unions and directly in industrial enterprises.

Action within the unions is the task of the Communists fractions. While their subterranean activity in the free unions has been curtailed by the 1953 shift in Communist tactics, they remain the primary instrumentality for imposing the party's will upon the rank-and-file membership of the CGT-affiliated unions. Their effectiveness derives in part from disciplined action and observance of the strategic principle of exerting maximum strength at a given time and place, but its main foundation is an almost unbreakable grip on the directing boards of the unions. Although on three occasions arbitrary Communist acts all but stripped the CGT unions of the bulk of their memberships, the party fractions still retained their control of the union managements.

The second prong of the Communist pincers is formed by party cells organized inside the factories and workshops, where they provide a highly flexible supplementary channel both for mobilizing outside support of the policies of the CGT unions and for encouraging opposition among the unaffiliated workers to the non-Communist unions. The cells have also been instrumental, through agitation carried on in so-called "non-organized" or "non-party" workers' committees, in inciting "wildcat" strikes for which the Communists wished to avoid official responsibility — a technique known in party jargon as "the independent direction of strike movements." They have a still further use of particular concern to the free unions: when the latter consent to form joint action groups with Communist unions subject to certain Communist commitments, the cells are not bound by these pledges and remain free to continue agitation directed at the free union signatories.

In the factory committees *(comités d'entreprise)* established in French industrial concerns after World War II, the Communists found another extremely useful instrument for expanding their labor influence. The original election rules, based exclusively on the majority principle, had the effect of delivering the committees from the start into almost total subjugation to the united, Communist-led CGT. This situation was altered in 1947 by the institution of a proportional electoral system, which extended representation to the Christian and independent unions, and later to those of the CGT-Force Ouvrière, but the CGT continued in most instances to hold a wide margin of superiority.

The Communists looked upon the committees from their inception not as genuine organs for labor-management cooperation in the management of enterprise, but as "battlefields for the class struggle" or, more concretely, as agencies to serve the cause of Communist revolution through industrial espionage and sabotage. Ambroise Croizat, former Communist Labor Minister and a proponent of the original legislation establishing the committees, implied as much in a 1948 statement which called the setting up of these organs in all enterprises "the first step to be accomplished for perfecting the [party's] investigative network and sharpening [its] weapon of combat." [4]

Though never successful in carrying out such revolutionary tasks, the committees proved an invaluable asset to the party. This is because they are the administrators of social welfare projects in the enterprises and, as such, control substantial funds contributed annually by the managements for these activities. The

[4] *Revue des Comités d'enterprise,* official CGT review, Paris, No. 1, 1948.

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Renault plant at Billancourt, where the 1954 subsidy amounted to 443,000,000 francs, or over $1,265,000, provides an excellent illustration of how the funds are used by the Communist-controlled committees.

First of all, the welfare projects create a large number of jobs which are awarded by the committee to deserving Communists: at Renault in 1952, there were 429 employees in the committee-operated workers' canteens alone. (In frequent instances, Communist activists fired from production jobs by the Renault management are rehired by the committee and thus enabled to continue agitational work at management expense.) The committee also appropriates 42,000,000 francs, or $120,000, annually for "recreation and culture", including under this heading a subsidy given to the Communist-run "New University" and funds used to finance "educative" trips to the Soviet Union and the "people's democracies." Social gatherings organized by the committee are used for disseminating Communist propaganda. These remarks, for example, were addressed by the Renault committee secretary, a CGT electee, to an audience of thousands of workers' children attending the 1951 Christmas festival at the plant:

This Lefaucheux [then director-general of Renault] who doesn't want your papas and mamas to have enough to eat, is he not mean? [Cries of "Yes! Yes" from the audience] . . . [Referring to Korea] Little boys and girls, how terrible it is that there are children left without their parents! But this is what is happening every day in Korea thanks to the American barbarians! [5]

Communist propaganda today shuns the harsher, more aggressive language of 1951, but regardless of the change in tone the CGT-controlled factory committees are as active as ever in using their strategic position to impress upon the workers the views and policies of the party.

The CGT on the Defensive

IN the light of the foregoing, it is easy to understand why the French Communist leadership has come to regard the maintenance of the CGT's dominant position in the factory committees as critically important for the preservation of the party's influence among the workers. That position has been subject to increasing challenge from the free union organizations in recent years, but by and large the strenuous efforts and more moderate tactics of the CGT have enabled it to preserve a somewhat narrowed margin of superiority in the plant elections. With some exceptions, which have shown a tendency to increase in number since the late 1956 events in Hungary, the CGT remains in majority control of the factory committees in the larger industrial concerns. In the medium and small enterprises, however, the free unions have scored particularly impressive gains and, in a substantial number of concerns, have succeeded in wresting control of the committees away from the CGT.

The setbacks suffered by the CGT in some of the factory committee elections during 1956 resulted from the fact that the free unions in these instances, instead of competing against each other as in the past, put forward joint lists of candidates with a common program. On the other hand, the continuing high rate of voting abstention in many plants worked to the advantage of the CGT: for example, in a large Paris machine works where the abstention rate had consistently been 50-60 percent in all elections over the past five years, the CGT captured 14 out of the total 17 committee seats.

The ruthless Soviet repression of the Hungarian revolt in November 1956 dealt an unusually severe blow to the electoral influence of the CGT. While that influence had already been in a slowly declining trend prior to the Soviet intervention, the drop indicated by the results of plant elections held in the immediately subsequent months was sudden and sharply accentuated. Reductions in the CGT vote even in large enterprises ranged from 10 to as much as 50 percent and resulted in several instances in the loss of majority control in the factory committees.[6] In general, the votes lost went to the free unions, either CFTC or Force-Ouvrière, though in some cases the decline in the CGT vote represented merely an increased number of abstentions.

Disturbing as these initial losses were to the CGT leadership, more recent developments appear to indicate that the impact of the Hungarian affair has waned and that the exodus of workers from the CGT camp has either halted or slowed down to minor proportions. Bearing in mind the lesson of past crises in which the CGT sprang back after suffering wholesale defections, it would be normal to expect that there will also be some recovery of the ground lost in the immediate wake of the Hungarian crisis. The real basis of the CGT's strength lies not in its fluctuating numerical following among the workers, but rather in its solidly entrenched directing apparatus. This appears to have survived,

[5] From text of speech published in *Le Combat,* CGT organ of the Renault factory committee, special edition of February 15, 1952.

[6] The principal concerns in which the CGT lost majority control were the Wendel steel works, the Peugeot and Berliet automobile plants, the Saint-Nazaire shipyards, the Ugine electro-metallurgical plant, and the Galeries Lafayette department store in Paris.

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without serious impairment, the shock to which the Hungarian crisis subjected it.

Summary and Outlook

THE postwar evolution of the French labor movement thus reflects a number of peculiar and conflicting behavior trends. The great majority of workers remain outside the organized unions, or rather have ceased to give them active support since the 1947 scission in the CGT. This unorganized majority holds the potential power to swing the balance in favor of the free unions and for the most part favors, either openly or tacitly, the policies of these unions with respect to collective agreements. Yet its individual members are habitually reluctant to support the action of a single union, whether free or—especially—one belonging to the CGT; and too often they see, in the divisive tendencies of the free unions, a manifestation of sectarian rivalry at variance with their own aspirations toward greater well-being. The CGT unions meanwhile benefit from their longstanding activity, in most cases extending back ten years, as well as from the psychological forces of tradition and habit. They are also favored by the reluctance or refusal of some enterprise managements to enter into contractual relationships with the free unions.

These conflicting behavior patterns stem, perhaps, from the basic individualism of the French working class, which traditionally has been more susceptible than any other to the appeal of revolutionary ideologies. Every time it has united in a single organization, that unity was eventually shattered by political developments or by Communist machinations, and the natural reaction of the workers was frustration and revulsion against the very principle of labor organization. This probably explains why the free unions have never fully profited from the periodic defections from the CGT, and why many rank-and-file workers derive subconscious satisfaction from the present state of labor disunity. Nor has it been forgotten that labor's most important gains in the past were won through spontaneous actions by the workers themselves, unprepared by the labor organizations which only intervened to exploit those actions for the sake of their own prestige.

In the last analysis, the conjuncture of political and economic developments will determine the future evolution of the French labor situation. If the present threat of inflation should lead to price increases and the consequent economic distress of the working class should be compounded by a new political crisis, the Communist-led CGT could conceivably recoup its recent losses and even regain the opportunity which it lost in 1947. Should these eventualities not arise, the still smoldering crisis in world communism could result in a further gradual erosion of the strength and discipline of the CGT unions.

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An Inquiry into Totalitarianism

Karl A. Wittfogel:
Oriental Despotism:
A Comparative Study of Total Power
Yale University Press, 1957.

Reviewed by Richard L. Walker

ORIENTAL Despotism is one of the truly significant intellectual achievements of our age. It is the product of three and one-half decades of prodigious research, courageous scholarly pioneering, masterful synthesis, and creative thinking. Karl Wittfogel, by this work alone, ranks with those few universal scholars whose contributions future historians and social scientists dare not ignore.

For over a century Western institutional history has been paralyzed by its inability to move beyond the configurations of its own experience in interpreting forms of society and politics elsewhere in the world. Even scholars in Asia have tended to accept, along with Western technology, our terminology and patterns of thought as generally applicable to their own institutions. This has led to some ludicrous results—for example, attempts to interpret societies like China and India in terms of Western feudalism. Such ethnocentrism in scholarship has probably played a great part in our failure to appreciate the importance of the great despotisms of the Orient for an understanding of twentieth-century totalitarianism.

The sterility of an approach to comparative social institutions based on strictly Western experience has also aided post-1917 communism in selling its doctrine of unilinear societal development to an unsuspecting world. This is the basic Marxist doctrine which holds that all mankind must pass through a unilinear historic progression from slavery through feudalism and capitalism to socialism. Marx himself, however, had recognized that outside the framework of European experience there was an "Asian society" with an "Asian mode of production" which did not fit into his scheme of social development. This concept of a different "Oriental society," where class was determined by relationship to a despotic ruling bureaucracy, caused much anguish within the camp of Marxian orthodoxy after the establishment of Soviet power; not only did it create difficulties in applying Marxism universally, but it was also strongly suggestive of the type of society being developed in the Soviet Union. As a result Moscow-led Marxists insisted on a reversion back toward the unilinear concept, and by 1950 the Stalinists had succeeded in expunging any references to "Asian society" from the canonical works.

For years Mr. Wittfogel has addressed himself to the problem with which Marx failed to cope, devoting himself to the task of developing a framework for understanding the great despotic institutions which have predominated in the social history of mankind. During the first years of his research, which began in 1922, he was influenced by Max Weber and the German ecologists as well as by Marx. His subject was almost exclusively China, and it was in his research on China that he developed the concept of *hydraulic society* which is the cornerstone of the present work. But an inquisitive mind could not ignore the parallels—long pointed to—between Chinese institutions and those of some of the other great centralized states in history. Wittfogel has now expanded the scope of his study and has brought to bear on it the advances made in such fields as cultural anthropology.

For the origins of Oriental society he turns to the geographical setting of civilizations where, during the transition from pastoral to agricultural stages, arid or semi-arid conditions led to the necessity for controlling water—productively for irrigation and protectively for flood control. Large-scale irrigation farming necessitated the creation of a pattern of bureaucratic rule, placing full power in the hands of a vast bureaucracy which forced the masses to do what was necessary for their own survival. Once consolidated, these bureaucracies moved beyond the immediate hydraulic tasks into other activities which tended to symbolize and enhance their power: huge defense structures, roads, palaces,

Mr. Walker is Chairman of the Department of International Studies, University of South Carolina. A specialist on the Far East, he has published many studies, the latest of which was *China Under Communism* (Yale University Press, 1955).

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temples, *etc.* Society became stratified into two groups: the bureaucratic rulers and the masses who were ruled. Wittfogel finds common structural patterns in the agrarian civilizations of such widely scattered areas as Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, Persia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Hawaii, and even Meso-America. Because the classical English economists from whom he draws much inspiration used the term "Oriental society" to describe the great despotisms in the East, he accepts their term as interchangeable with "hydraulic society" but he prefer the latter because it describes a specific institutional conformation which is not necessarily limited by geography.

Wittfogel finds that hydraulic society "dwarfed all other agrarian societies in dimension and institutional diversity." (Dimension here means durability, extent of power, and the size of the population dominated.) He therefore gives meticulous attention to developing and defining the various sub-types of this social structure both in terms of internal organization and of environment, supporting his analysis with a wealth of illustrative material. The result is a comprehensive picture of a societal type which until now has been little understood, and the significance of which we would ignore at our peril in the world today.

In successive chapters Wittfogel points out that the hydraulic economy is completely managerial and completely political (Chapter 2), that the state is always stronger than society (Chapter 3). For the "monopoly bureaucracy" there is an absence of effective checks on total power. In some states such as traditional China a looseness of bureaucratic control allowed politically insignificant forms of association such as family, village, guild, and religion to play a secondary role (Chapter 4), but the hydraulic society tended toward total power, total terror, total submission, and total loneliness (Chapter 5). He discusses the interrelationships of hydraulic societies with surrounding areas and the transmission of techniques of bureaucratic control from one area to another over the historical past (Chapter 6).

Most significant is the analysis of property and class relationships within hydraulic society (Chapters 7 and 8). Wittfogel points out that Western concepts of class, which have been based primarily on a system of private property, have little application to Oriental society, where relationship to the state apparatus played the key role in determining status. He thus makes a very useful distinction between the strong power of property in the West and its weakness in Oriental society. By presenting an entirely new analysis of the relations between property and class which obtain in a bureaucratic despotism, Wittfogel highlights the important role which private property has played in limiting arbitrary political power and making possible a rule of law in the West.

Chapter 9 of the book—by far the most readable—is a detective story-like account of the attempts of the Soviet ideologists to escape from the implications which an analysis of Oriental society holds for their system, particularly concerning the role of the bureaucracy as a ruling class. The author makes clear, for example, why the "feudalism" issue is so crucial in the spread of Soviet communism to Asia. Only by squeezing the societies of Asia into the framework of a "feudal" class struggle can their development of bureaucratic despotism be ignored. The final Chapter 10, "Oriental Society in Transition," brings into focus the problems faced by various states in trying to avoid retrogression to today's even more oppressive forms of despotism, made possible by the totalitarian methods developed in the twentieth-century Stalinist and Hitlerian societies.

It is, of course, impossible to present in a few words more than a hint of the many brilliant concepts and wealth of historical evidence which have been packed into the 556 pages of this volume. One crucial idea is Wittfogel's concept of the "multicentered society" of the West, where government, business, agriculture, labor, religion and other groupings balance and check each other, as contrasted with the "unicentered society" under Oriental despotism or modern totalitarianism, where there are no checks on the monopoly control of a single center. This concept provides the nucleus of an approach for combating totalitarian trends throughout the world today. There will be a few scholars in any field of social science who will not find their ideas challenged and broadened by similar displays of Wittfogel's conceptual creativity.

In many places *Oriental Despotism* is not easy reading. Some readers will object to a new terminology which is at times cumbersome; others will find small items on which they will disagree. This reviewer, for example, would prefer to have seen a more extended treatment of the relationship of ideology to the power structure in hydraulic society. But few will be able to deny that Wittfogel has made a tremendous intellectual stride forward, a stride which is happily in the direction of realism in world thinking. By focusing on the intellectual dishonesty of the Kremlin leaders in suppressing the Marxian concept of a different "Asian society," Wittfogel demonstrates their awareness that the concept is devastating to their pretensions and aspirations of universality. In the long run, this analysis of Oriental despotism could deprive the Soviets of their claim to be leaders of a "progressive" movement; for Wittfogel has demonstrated incontestably that modern totalitarianism is an enormous retrogression toward what Marx once termed "general slavery."

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Moscow and American Radicalism

Theodore Draper:
The Roots of American Communism
New York, Viking Press, 1957

Reviewed by Ben B. Seligman

FIRST-rate studies are available on the histories of various of the national Communist movements in the world. Curiously enough, however, almost the only works on the Communist Party of the United States have been the distorted writings of its partisans, filled with the kind of barbed remarks and preposterous history that characterized the books of Philip Foner and William Z. Foster. The present volume is a welcome counterweight to the tendentious outflow that preceded it, providing the first reliable and objective study of the origins of the CPUSA yet be published.

Written by one who was himself a Communist activist in the early 1930's and who contributed to the *Daily Worker* and TASS, the book is all the more remarkable, for it is as fine a job of historiography as could be hoped for. Mr. Draper, who has long since turned his back on the Communist Party and all its doings, has not allowed his battle wounds to impair his insight. In fact, his experience has enabled him to penetrate skillfully the dense palimpsest that had been created by Stalinist scribes.

The first volume of a projected series on the influence of communism in American life,[1] Mr. Draper's work analyzes the origins of the American movement and traces its early history through 1923. (In a future volume he will take the story up to 1945.) Not only has the author assiduously mined the most treacherous of archives, but he has gone to the trouble of interviewing Earl Browder, Jay Lovestone, Max Bedacht, Bertram D. Wolfe and others who played a role in the founding of the CPUSA.

[1] The series, sponsored by the Ford Foundation's Fund of the Republic, is under the general editorship of Dr. Clinton Rossiter.

Mr. Seligman, who has contributed to this magazine as well as to various other American publications, has been active in the American labor movement for many years, and is at present the Assistant to the Director of International Affairs of the United Automobile Workers Union.

In essence, what Mr. Draper relates is the sad and frequently comic story of how a native radical movement was seduced and subverted through a fatal attraction to the historically explosive event of the Russian Revolution. The early American Communists, who came to maturity in the years just before the outbreak of World War I, had roots in an acknowledged native radicalism. Social democracy had come to these shores some forty years earlier and there had been ample time for its outlook to acquire some domestication. The more economic-minded skilled worker began to build the AFL while the politically oriented radical tried his hand at forging a Socialist movement. When the Socialist Party was founded in 1901, there were more persons in it who got their socialism from American utopian novels than those who had imbibed Karl Marx.

Throughout this period, says Mr. Draper, there were groups that could justifiably be designated as left wing. They disdained the "pure and simple trade unionism" of a Samuel Gompers in order to turn with enthusiastic anticipation to the robot syndicalism of a Big Bill Haywood, the famous leader of the American sydicalist union, the I.W.W. These groups were not averse to using violence and "direct action" as a means to the end of "proletarian salvation."

YET socialism and radical syndicalism were not the sole sources for the American leftist impulse. Mr. Draper reminds us of the Populists in the 1890's and of the Progressive era with its "muckraking" and "political realism." These movements had expressed a sharp rebellion against the excesses of a burgeoning industrialization and were identified with an upsurge of popular hostility to the dominant economic and social groups in American society. At the turn of the century much of their sentiment began to transfer itself to the nascent Socialist Party, which by 1912 was to garner some six percent of 15 million presidential votes. There was a literary left, too, which published magazines and wild tracts on freedom. By 1917, however, the Socialist Party, wracked by disputes between a left and a right wing, was in shambles, and a Communist trend in American politics was clearly emerging.

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Curiously enough, the major foreign influence on the American left before World War I was Dutch, not Russian. Dutch Social democracy under Anton Pannekoek and Herman Gorter was somewhat anarcho-syndicalist in its preference, and as such was to prove fairly congenial to the historic left in the United States. It was Pannekoek's condemnation of the war as an imperialist adventure that laid the ideological groundwork for the Third International, preceding even Lenin's call at Zimmerwald in 1915. But with the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, the Dutch influence receded and the excitement of a new world in birth brought bolshevism to the fore as a dominant factor in the nascent American movement. The deadly attraction started with Alexandra Kollantay's visit to the US in 1915 and continued on through Trotsky's brief sojourn in New York some two years later. The result was a split down the middle of the Socialist Party: the left wing did not have long to wait for an opportunity to force a showdown, nor did the right wing, which controlled the major share of the party apparatus, dodge the challenge. By the time of the 1917 convention it was clear that an American Communist Party was in the making.

The successful Bolshevik uprising in Russia was the real spark which impelled communism forward, says Mr. Draper. For decades Socialists had cultivated the political vineyards without much to exhibit for their herculean labors, and here at one fell blow "socialists" could boast of power. Bolshevik theory and practice seemed a short cut to the millennium, for a small band of determined revolutionaries had seized the government in a country where a proletarian triumph was least expected. As Mr. Draper says, this had a virtually hypnotic pull. A Bolshevik bandwagon began to roll and all sorts of radicals climbed aboard. Lincoln Steffens, the famous journalist, thought he had seen the future; John Reed, wealthy bohemian and top reporter, drowned himself in an orgy of enthusiasm; Max Eastman viewed the Soviets as the fulfillment of Plato's Republic. But it was not too long before most of them would discover that they had been deceived, that the New Atlantis was little more than an arena for a deadly power struggle which would in the end destroy most of those who had fought to set it up.

Meanwhile, through splits and countersplits, the American left moved inexorably towards its transformation into a full-fledged Communist Party with a party press, inner cells and outer ring of fellow travelers. In 1919, the Soviet government directed Ludwig Martens, the first in a long chain of Comintern agents in the US, to open an official American agency for them. Martens wanted to restrict himself to diplomatic and commercial work, but he soon became involved in domestic Communist machinations which quickly brought his activities to the attention of the US government. The Soviets learned from this experience that it was better to separate diplomatic action from revolutionary work, at least on the surface.

Mr. Draper explores in considerable detail the repeated schisms and fusions among adherents of the new movement. The Communist Party, the Communist Labor Party and the Workers Party jockeyed about in furious factionalism for the exclusive right to be in the vanguard of the American proletariat, until they all were ordered by Moscow to get together. Each claimed its own orthodoxy and each felt itself purer and superior to the others in its pursuit of the "right road" to socialism. While the membership of these groups had a high component of recent immigrants, the leadership quickly passed into the hands of native Americans—Charles Ruthenberg, Earl Browder, William Z. Foster.

Even in America, where the Communist movement was so pitifully weak, the "revolution" started early to devour its children. John Reed, a name that American Communists would afterward hold up as the ideal native radical, voiced a sense of disappointment and disillusion not too long before he died of typhus in 1920. (His ashes now fill a niche in the Kremlin wall.) Louis Fraina, known to later generations as Lewis Corey, economist and labor expert, was driven from the party, excoriated and viciously persecuted for years because he presumably knew too much about inner party machinations. These were but harbingers of how the party would deal in the future with anyone evincing independence or a desire to think for himself.

By 1923, the American Communist Party was fully under Moscow's control. The early ultra-revolutionary line was changed in an effort to accommodate to the American scene a now thoroughly Russified organization. The underground operation was given up in an attempt to create a presumably legal party that would appeal to workers. But this and occasional subsequent deferences to Americanism only disguised local responses to Soviet stimuli. As Mr. Draper says, and as has been demonstrated again and again, it was the Russians who always began and ended the "line".

The author has given us a revealing survey of an important experience in American history. He demonstrates with unmistakable clarity how a native impulse was chained to the Soviet hub and American radicals converted into active agents of Russian policy. While much of the overall story has been fairly well known, the part Mr. Draper tells has been too long lost in hidden records; he deserves the highest praise for having brought it into the light for all to see.

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Correspondence

EDITOR'S NOTE: Readers are welcome to send communications dealing with matters discussed in *Problems of Communism.* Letters should be addressed to the Editors, *Problems of Communism,* U. S. Information Agency, 1776 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington 25, D.C.

GREAT RUSSIAN NATIONALISM?

In the concluding part of his article "Ideology and Power," (No. 1, January-February 1957), Professor Brzezinski expresses an opinion to which I must register my strongest objection. He says:

However, it would be idle to expect a repetition of the Hungarian or Polish experiences in the USSR itself. There the regime has not been imposed from the outside, has far greater capacity for survival, and doubtless enjoys a greater measure of popular support or at least acceptance.

The clear implication of this passage—namely, that the Soviet regime has a specifically Russian character and is imposed upon Russians alone—is, to say the least, a gross distortion of political and historical reality. To ignore the fact that the USSR itself is comprised of non-Russian nationalities and peoples held captive by Moscow serves only to mislead the general public from acquiring a basic comprehension of the Soviet Union.

Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Turkmenistan and others were the earliest victims (the first "satellites") of Soviet communism, beginning in the years 1920-21. Since that time, they have been characterized by chronic unrest and dissatisfaction. Poland and Hungary are the most recent instances where uprisings have taken place, but the Soviet "republics" have a far older history of unrest. Acts of insurrection and dissidence have taken place and continue to take place in the Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and in the central Asiatic republics where Moslems form the bulk of the population.

It is regrettable, particularly at this crucial stage of world history, that a Great Russian orientation marks the thinking of eminent scholars such as Professor Brzezinski and that your magazine helps to disseminate it.

New York City **Vernon Callian**

Mr. Brzezinski replies: I find it difficult to understand how my observation to the effect that in the USSR "the regime had not been imposed from the outside" reflects a Great Russian orientation" (!) on my part. Unlike Poland or Hungary, the political character of the USSR is the result of an internal seizure of power. Admittedly, in that seizure and consolidation of power the Russian national element had been of prime, but not sole importance. This fact should not be surprising if one considers that the Russians are the dominant group, accounting for about 50 percent of the population (a fact Mr. Callian disregards).

I readily admit, however, that many members of the minority groups resent Russian domination and would prefer independent statehood. I met some last fall myself in the USSR. But this in no way contradicts the proposition that the Soviet regime, which has endured for forty years and has had an entire generation grow up under it, is more entrenched and has larger numbers of people with a vested interest in its continuance than, for instance the Hungarian one which the Hungarians themselves overthrew.

A READER'S COMMENT...

I have gone through some of the articles in two recent issues of *Problems of Communism* with considerable interest. One of the marked features of the articles which struck me is that the authors have based their observations on factual data. Every article seemed to give a coherent background, which facilitates fair appraisal of the problems dealt with.

I take great pleasure in acknowledging that such thought-provoking articles would be helpful in the formation of a balanced estimate of current international issues on my part.

New Delhi, India **C. Sarkar**

[*Editor-in-Charge of the United Press of India, national press syndicate*].

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